STAR WARS®

EDGE OF THE EMPIRE™

ENTER THE UNKNOWN™

A Sourcebook for Explorers

STAR WARS® ROLEPLAYING

STAR WARS®

EDGE OF THE EMPIRE™

ROLEPLAYING GAME

ENTER THE UNKNOWN™

Turmoil engulfs the galaxy. Soldiers and pilots fight for their lives while gangsters and bounty hunters exploit the conflict for profit. Meanwhile, far from the war, adventurous individuals live a life of excitement and opportunity among the stars.

On the fringes of civilization, these explorers seek out lost artifacts, unexplored hyperroutes, and any new adventure they can find. They rely on their skills, technology, and allies to survive and thrive in hostile environments far from the core. As war rages on, they enter the unknown corners of the galaxy to discover ancient secrets and new opportunities....

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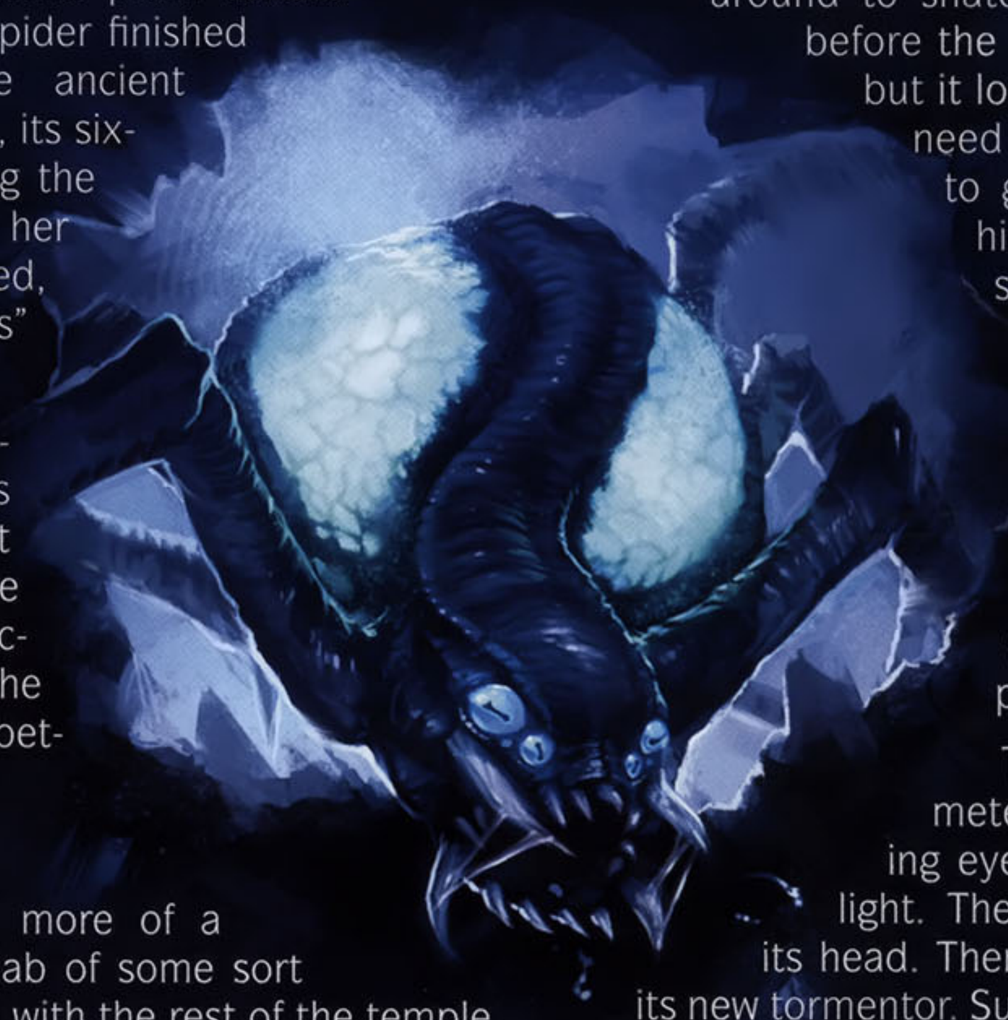
Just...you know, keep it busy!"

The gigantic, ten-legged spider reared up and howled, and Janese spared me a look she reserved for the irrevocably insane. "Keep it busy, Levat? That's your plan?"

"Well, I'm sorry, Jan, but my ancient Rakatan is just a little rusty. So if I'm going to get this temple door open before that... whatever that is comes over here and has us for lunch, I need a few minutes!"

"Not to worry, ma'am." Keth had his rifle case open and snapped the pieces of his hunting weapon together as he spoke. "You keep that creature engaged, and I may be able to eliminate it with a clear shot."

Janese glared at us both for a long moment before throwing up her hands. "Fine! I just hope that after it's done with me, it doesn't decide it's not hungry." She jogged across the stone plaza toward our landspeeder as the spider finished clambering through the ancient stone arch on the far side, its sixteen beady eyes scanning the ruins for food. I heard her swearing about "red-eyed, blue-skinned psychopaths" as she left.



The Chiss finished attaching the stock of his hunting rifle. He didn't spare me a glance before sprinting in the other direction toward a pillar where he could presumably get a better shot at the spider.

"Mammals," I muttered.

The temple door was more of a gate—a ten-meter-high slab of some sort of fused rock that fit flush with the rest of the temple wall. The structure stretched more than a hundred meters into the air, and as far as we could tell, this was the only entrance. From top to bottom, someone had spent a great deal of time carving an intricate combination of bas-relief and blocky script into every square centimeter of the door. The script was Rakatan, I was sure, but the temple was constructed later than their mythical "Infinite Empire." Maybe it was built by the Tionese, or perhaps it was an offshoot of one of the Empress Teta sleeper colonies...

Behind me I heard a whoop as Janese maneuvered our battered landspeeder between the spider-creature's legs, the monster roaring in frustration as it attempted to spear her with its razor-sharp hooves. No doubt it was all very impressive, but that wasn't going to get me any closer to interpreting how to get this door open.

Now, that phonetic cluster that meant "God of Storms," if I remembered correctly. And that phrase meant roughly "Unleash." That didn't seem too important, except it was near the writing that wrapped in a circle around a hand-sized disk in the center of the door, just high enough to reach. If my Rakatan was right, that writing spelled out the ancient equivalent of "Push here to open." However, it was the other words, plus a phrase that I think said "Heathens be warned," that worried me.

The sound of a blaster rifle cut through my reverie. Keth had finished climbing the pillar and had taken his shot at the spider-creature. The smug Chiss's aim was spot on as usual; his bolt hit the creature in one of its eyes. It reared back on its hind legs, howled in pain, and then shook its head and charged the pillar.

Keth jumped clear just before the creature hit, but the pillar disintegrated under the blow. The creature seemed merely enraged. Janese spun the speeder around to snatch up the stunned hunter before the spider-creature recovered, but it looked like we were going to need some serious firepower to get through the monster's hide. Just like we'd need some serious protection to avoid whatever pitfall waited on the other side of this door...

I reached into my pocket and pulled out my flare gun, leveled it at the spider-creature's face, and pulled the trigger.

The flare exploded centimeters from its fifteen remaining eyes, dazzling it in a burst of light. The creature howled, shaking its head. Then, furious, it turned to face its new tormentor. Suddenly, I had fifteen tons of enraged spider-creature charging at me.

Just before I ended up mashed into Duros paste, I jumped sideways, trying to get as far away from the door as possible. The creature was many things, but it wasn't agile; the diamond-hard hooves skittered on the stone as it tried to change direction midcharge. Instead it skidded straight into the door.

The rock shattered under the blow, and that triggered the twenty-thousand-year-old booby-trap. A massive, brilliant electrical discharge fired off from all around the door, cutting the spider-creature in half and sending ichor, bits of charred carapace, and snapping mandibles flying in all directions.

By the time Keth and Janese made it back to me, I was leaning next to the smoking corpse, straightening my hat and lighting a cigarra.

"Door's open," I said. "What took you so long?"

EXPLORATION AT THE EDGE OF THE EMPIRE

The *Star Wars* galaxy is so large and varied an environment that charting it in detail is a never-ending process. For the dedicated explorer, there are always new hyperroutes to blaze, far-off systems to chart, and fresh mysteries to investigate on hundreds of worlds.

Enter the Unknown provides GMs and players of **Edge of the Empire** with all the tools they need to create unique Explorer characters and adventures.

Chapter I, **Galactic Sojourners**, provides new playable species and talent trees that players can use to create wily Toydarian Archaeologists, dashing Chiss Big-Game Hunters, sharp-eyed Duros Drivers, and much more. New abilities and Motivations for such Explorer characters are also provided.

The **Expanded Ships and Gear** in Chapter II lists a range of weapons, armor, and gear, as well as more esoteric items that might be employed by the many specializations of the Explorer career or any other interested characters. The list covers personal items such as Enviro-Suits and E-11 Sniper Rifles and vehicles such as the 57-D Speeder Bike and Ghtroc 720 Light Freighter.

Finally, Chapter III, **Grand Expeditions**, takes a look at how GMs can employ the theme of exploration to the best effect in their games. Ideas for exciting story lines, adventure hooks, and fearsome nemeses are detailed, as well as advice on how to form a truly memorable roleplaying campaign from such elements.

While the most famous explorers are those who brave uncharted space, discovery takes many forms. The efforts of learned archaeologists to shed new light on the galaxy's oldest civilizations stand in stark contrast to the skills of loquacious merchants negotiating their way into new markets. Both ventures are forms of exploration, though neither one necessarily involves a journey into the depths of the Unknown Regions.

EXPLORATION IN *STAR WARS*

The fringes of the galaxy are not limited to the edges of charted space, the Rimward edge of the Outer Rim, and the vast reaches of the Unknown Regions. In one sense, the fringes are everywhere, for mysteries and secrets exist even on heavily populated worlds like Coruscant. In all sectors of the galaxy there exist planets and systems that have yet to be properly scouted or mapped. Yet when beings speak of the fringes, they tend to mean those planets and systems that are culturally distant from the "civilization" held dear at the center of the galaxy. Tatooine, for example, is considered a fringe world, even though it was charted and settled a long time ago.

Exploring the fringes is not merely a matter of launching off into the Unknown Regions in the hopes of discovering new worlds. Virgin territory might exist on a planet that has been long settled, but that contains tracts of wilderness unknown to all but the most experienced local scouts. Ancient ruins attract the attention of archaeological parties, and big-game hunters may wish to pit their strength and wits against the most dangerous predators of the local ecosystem.

For the most part, however, when beings discuss exploration, they mean the attempt to discover new worlds and hyperroutes, expanding the frontiers of the civilized galaxy beyond its present borders. New planets can prove great sources of wealth and opportunity for those who are first to chart them and return to tell the tale. Naive explorers might find that discovering new worlds is the easy part but working out the subsequent political and logistical issues is quite another matter. From the Hutts to the Empire, from the corporations to the Rebel Alliance, everyone wants a stake in the possibilities that open with the discovery of a new habitable planet.

The existing network of hyperlanes, while it facilitates the movement of thousands of warships, liners, and freighters around the galaxy, is far from optimum. The shifting positions of various stellar objects in real space means that all but the most stable of hyperlanes are in a constant state of flux. Smaller and less stable hyperroutes may have to be remapped or bypassed if the shadow of real space objects, such as meteors or wandering planets, crosses their paths. Even those hyperlanes that are safe from such phenomena bear closer examination—parsecs may be shaved off here and there by canny or daring hyperspace mappers who know best how to take a shortcut.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EXPLORATION

While ancient civilizations such as the Rakatan Infinite Empire and Killik had made some headway into investigating the farthest reaches of the galaxy before the rise of the Galactic Republic, the history of exploration really began about 25,000 years before the Battle of Yavin. Prior to that period, humans and members of many other species had been enslaved to provide a source of labor for the Infinite Empire. The Rakata diminished as a result of disease and violent slave revolts. With their old masters at bay, species such as humans and Duros began a tentative process of exploring the galaxy.



At first, the knowledge and technology required to access hyperspace was not fully developed. Early travel to distant worlds involved painfully slow sublight travel on board "sleeper ships," in which explorers and colonists were held frozen in carbonite until the vessel reached a suitable destination. Such journeys could take decades or even centuries.

Early hyperdrives, such as those employed by the Rakata, were of limited use, only being able to navigate between worlds with strong Force signatures. Shortly before the fall of the Infinite Empire, the Devaronians and Gossams experimented with tumble hyperdrives, which were more versatile than the Rakatan technology but also less predictable. In time, hyperdrives were developed by reverse engineering looted Rakatan technology, and between 25,000 and 20,000 BBY, early hyperdrive exploration saw the Galactic Republic push its territory toward the galactic east, blazing much of the Perlemian Trade Route and Corellian Run as it did so. Space exploration at this time was regulated by the Hyperspace Navigators Guild, an effective astrogation guild that paid out large credit rewards to those who found new hyperspace routes and systems. The Brotherhood still exists in the present day, though its influence and reputation for largesse is much diminished.

Over the subsequent 20,000 years, the Galactic Republic swelled to its present size, though to assume that all the territory it has claimed as its own has been fully charted would be naïve. Thorough exploration of the area around core worlds, such as Coruscant and Corellia, has taken place, and the charting of worlds and systems that lie along the major hyperroutes is fairly comprehensive. The tracts of space in between such hyperroutes are also well known to astrogators, though there are still thousands of cubic parsecs that have yet to be properly charted.

EXPLORING AT THE EDGE

Since the rise of the Galactic Empire, the business of exploration has changed from one of cooperation between a network of peers into a more complicated and paranoid enterprise. During the days of the Galactic Republic, most explorers were open about their discoveries. Certainly there was rivalry, both professional and personal, between the various navigators and trailblazers who earned their living by charting new territory. However, the form such rivalry took was typically marked by good sportsmanship and ethical consideration of any new species and civilizations encountered.

Under the rule of the Empire, however, this is no longer the case. Explorers find themselves polarized between those who are happy to work alongside the Empire and those who are not.

Explorers who are happy to work alongside the Empire now do so in a far more ruthless manner than their predecessors. The Empire is motivated to assist its burgeoning war effort through the exploitation of new resources. New habitable worlds are also of interest in order to construct hidden facilities and testing grounds. Regulatory bodies such as the Hyperspace Navigators Guild have been pushed to the sidelines as the Empire approves of speedier methods by which to locate and monitor possible sources of raw materials. Without these regulations in place, the business of who has the rights to which discoveries is much more hotly contested and the competition between explorers has become ruthless.

When encountering a new species, explorers working within the standards set by the Galactic Republic tended to take the attitude that it was better to leave the species to develop in peace rather than interfere. Some worlds with primitive populations of sentient aliens were colonized before the rise of the Empire, but these were exceptions. In its own turn, the Empire shows little concern for alien species, pushing for recognition of the rights and privileges of the human species over and above those of the other sentient beings with whom they share the galaxy.

Newly discovered civilizations and primitive populations are now no longer the subject of distant monitoring while they develop in peace but instead may be stripped of their wealth, forced into labor, or even violently persecuted. This can be seen on the planet Mimban, where the primitive native alien societies once lived in peace with only minimum contact from the Republic. With the discovery of precious dolovite ore, the planet has witnessed the arrival of heavy industry and planetwide environmental upheaval.

Those in the business of exploration who are not supporters of the Empire find themselves in a rather odd situation. In order to skirt the New Order's reach and profit from their undertakings, they must share their knowledge with interested parties who often have ties to the criminal underworld. Such explorers may work for the benefit of Hutt interests, although the Hutts are by no means more ethically concerned about new discoveries than agents of the Empire are.

Most explorers who oppose the Empire work for the Rebel Alliance, either directly or via Bothan intermediaries. Such explorers may even donate their finds to groups who suffer under the repressive regime of the Empire. Wookiee explorers are highly motivated by the need to find worlds that could support populations of their people safe from Imperial persecution. Habitable new worlds that might make a suitable location for a rebel base or that contain fields of raw material are also in high demand.

Not all those who sponsor exploration are politically motivated. Educational institutions such as the Mrlsst Planetary University also sponsor expeditions and may provide apolitical explorers the means to make a modest living from their discoveries.

TRADE THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY

Most planets in the galaxy, particularly those with sizable populations, take part in some sort of trade. Indeed, some planets are so heavily invested in the export of goods that they have effectively given themselves over to a single industry. The verdant world of Taanab is dedicated almost completely to the production of foodstuffs and by-products of agriculture. Freighters stuffed with livestock and foodstuffs make their way to heavily industrialized worlds such as Mustafar and Bonadan. They return with the sort of heavy machinery and barrels of chemicals that Taanab is poorly placed to produce for itself.

The existence of the Empire has had a significant effect on galactic trade. In the time before Imperial rule, trade was the concern of a flourishing and competitive private sector, consisting of a number of powerful and ruthless guilds. The Commerce Guild and the Trade Federation are major examples of the sort of institutions that dominated business at the time, and it was the acts of the latter that inadvertently brought about the rise of the Empire.

In 124 BBY the Galactic Senate declared that the Outer Rim Territories were to become a free-trade zone and that the larger guilds and corporations were entitled to representation in the Senate. The Trade Federation, a powerful shipping cartel, benefited greatly from these decisions and began to strike hard bargains with the impoverished Outer Rim systems to which it now had free access. These deals did not just enrich the Trade Federation but also granted it immediate and increasing political power, as those systems indebted to the Trade Federation tended to argue and vote in its favor in the Senate.

While the success of the Trade Federation won them approval from some quarters, many more began to resent its growing power and the chilling effect it had on competition. Opponents eventually mustered in such strength that a separatist movement began to win popularity in the Outer Rim. Senator Palpatine of Naboo played both factions off of one another, leading to a full-scale revolt in which Separatist forces gathered against those of the Republic, igniting the Clone Wars.

In the conflict's aftermath, Supreme Chancellor Palpatine was declared the ruler of the galaxy. As Emperor, some of Palpatine's first decisions were to Imperialize many of the powerful guilds and corporations, turning their assets over to government control and prioritizing military industry. Not all private enterprise was Imperialized; those corporations deemed loyal to the Empire were allowed to continue to trade. The Corporate Sector even expanded in size and influence.

During the Clone Wars, Senator Palpatine conspired with Baron Orman Tagge, a wealthy industrialist. Tagge saw to it that those corporations that had not supported the new regime were disenfranchised and the remaining corporations were represented by a new entity named the Corporate Sector Authority. In return for a free hand in the sector, the CSA would offer the Empire generous stipends and discounts.

Currently, the Corporate Sector is enjoying great business. In terms of producing profits, it has benefited greatly from the lack of regulation imposed on it, and flotillas of freighters make their journey down the Hydian Way, piled high with stock from companies such as TaggeCo, Chiewab Pharmaceuticals, and Cybot Galactica. The Corporate Sector also provides a refuge to those fleeing from the Empire's stormtroopers and is one of the few places in the galaxy where Wookiees and Mon Calamari can live without fear.

But all is not well within the Corporate Sector. Many of those who live there are regarded as consumers with privileges rather than citizens with rights. Unregulated industry has seen a record number of planets become sites of ecological catastrophe within short periods of time. While stormtroopers are rarely seen within the Corporate Sector, the CSA sponsors its own security police force, the Espos, who can be just as brutal in their operations.

While the Corporate Sector may be the most vibrant area in terms of production, the most famous trading sites in the galaxy are planets closer to the core. Planets such as Corellia, Anaxes, and Brentaal have rich mercantile histories stretching back millennia.

Traders looking to shift some goods or make a deal have a bewildering array of target markets to approach, but each carries its own consequences. The safest way to proceed is to contact the office of a sector Moff in order to make sure that any deals meet with the approval of the Empire. The Empire is unlikely to want to purchase anything other than military equipment from traders, but by letting them take first refusal, the trader does his best to avoid any retribution. The goods may have to wait in storage while the Empire decides what sort of duties to impose and whether to require that the trader do business with an approved buyer.

Representatives of the Corporate Sector may make for better customers; they are likely to pay better than the Empire and meet more of the trader's own terms. The trader will have to undergo some risk in reaching the Corporate Sector with his wares, having to turn smuggler in order to get there without declaring his cargo to agents of the Empire.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDS

The galaxy is home to a myriad of sentient species, each one the collective heir to millennia of cultural development. Many inhabitants of the galaxy have a deep fascination for the origins of cultures, as well as the histories (and prehistories) of all sentient species. Universities around the galaxy sponsor well-appointed archaeology faculties dedicated to the understanding of history illuminated through the examination of ancient buildings and artifacts. Many mysteries and wonders of the galaxy are yet to be fully understood, from the workings of the Celestials who retreated from the galaxy prior to the rise of the Infinite Empire to the position of the fabled treasure-filled Nova Vaults of Kakitai bel Toyouin.

Archaeology is by no means merely a matter of academic debate and lecture-hall pews filled with sleepy-eyed students. Fieldwork is the lifeblood of the discipline and even those archaeologists with a deep-abiding hatred of digging in the dirt have paid their dues in that regard. For even those who are more at home with trowel and electrodrill encourage the presence of more bookish experts on remote digs and daring expeditions. Marrying theory and praxis is the ultimate goal of those wishing to master the subject, so those with dirt on their fingers are careful to cultivate friendly relations with those who have ink on theirs.

Academics around the galaxy have been highly alarmed by the atrocities committed by the forces of the Empire. However, most of them are too frightened to make their voices heard. In 10 BBY a number of Gholondreine scholars published urgent and scathing critiques of Emperor Palpatine's rule. Imperial retribution was swift and decisive, seeing the planet drained of its green seas and seeded with Ithorian crawlers that poisoned the arid land left behind. The Gholondreine scholars who survived the devastation are now pitiful refugees, often having to rely on the support of their peers in other centers of learning.

While the Gholondreine Desiccation is the only Imperial atrocity that has directly targeted academics,

other acts of wanton vandalism and violence have left scholars outraged. From the perspective of archaeologists, the violent persecution inflicted on Wookiees, Mon Calamari, Nosaurians, and other species has denuded the galaxy of rich cultures and impressive buildings, alongside the more personal cost of having killed or deported a number of brilliant archaeological minds in the process.

Many archaeologists are particularly outraged by the actions of the Empire in destroying the planet Alderaan. The University of Alderaan was the site of an esteemed Archaeological Faculty, and a number of highly qualified archaeologists died there. The human cost was tremendous, but the destruction of rare texts and artifacts is also felt keenly by those who studied them.

In comparison to the shock and outrage at the atrocities of the Empire, it seems absurdly banal to mention the professional jealousies that affect many academics in their day-to-day work. However, proving their superiority over their rivals can be a significant motivating factor for many archaeologists, even in these desperate times. Archaeologists and historians with particular perspectives can find it a spur to activity if those perspectives are called into question through the discovery of fresh evidence or the construction of a newly fashionable theory.

As for those who can swallow their distaste and work alongside the Empire, there is much to be gained. Imperial investigations into old military sites, often in the search of weapons and vehicles employed by the warlords of ancient empires, provide decent pay and regular work to willing experts.

HUNTING BIG GAME

One aspect of galactic adventurism that has not suffered from Imperial sanction or interference is that of hunting big game. Many big-game hunters openly benefit from the fact that the Empire is less concerned with efforts to conserve species of nonsentient animals than the Galactic Republic and has relaxed a number of regulations in regard to protected species and habitats.

The best of the big-game hunters can even become celebrities, garnering large audiences for holodramas and documentaries recording their passion for entering the wild, tracking down some of the most powerful and majestic creatures in the galaxy, and shooting them dead with high-powered blaster rifles.

Some big-game hunters like to keep a trophy room aboard their spacecraft and craft or customize equipment using recognizable body parts. The famed Wookiee big-game hunter G'hhurrlha flies from hunting ground to hunting ground in a stripped-down Explorer Scout Ship, the chassis of which is decorated with a multitude of skulls, bones, and chitin plates taken from the various beasts he has vanquished. The heads of krayt dragons, adult acklay, and massive lyleks line the walls of the main cabin, which also features a dejarik table set into the preserved head of a bull rancor and a plush white wampa-skin rug.

A number of zoos and aquaria around the galaxy employ big-game hunters to find fresh exhibits. The Bollin Exotic Animal Emporium on Cularin is an example of one such institution, being a menagerie rather than a place to purchase animals as the name might imply. The Emporium's captive rancor was the only such creature in the system, and the zoo became a popular resort due to all those who wished to marvel at such a beast. In order to capture rancors for the Emporium, big-game hunters had to travel to distant Dathomir and then locate a prime specimen. The Emporium stipulated that the rancor had to be a large bull (in order to make for a properly spectacular exhibit) in its prime and with no infirmities (an old or ill beast would make for a pitiful sight and soon require a replacement).

Other customers include the Hutts, who have a passion for private menageries containing dangerous creatures with which to intimidate, and sometimes execute, those who have fallen into their disfavor. Some Hutts also cultivate the tastes of the gourmand and pay high prices for the flesh of animals they have yet to savor. As such, a number of Hutts keep big-game hunters on their books or as close members of their personal entourages.



GALACTIC SOJOURNERS

"One always takes his home with him, wherever he goes. Worlds are vast—yet they fit easily into one's heart."

– Ki-Adi-Mundi

Trillions upon trillions of beings throughout the galaxy simply go about their business, living the same day over and over again until they grow old and die. Some dream of a more exciting existence—of what lies beyond those flickering stars they see in the night sky. But only the barest whisper of a fraction dare to leave the safety of home and brave the dangers of the boundless galaxy. Driven by profit, knowledge, and the thrill of the hunt, they seek the new, discover the lost, and blaze such trails as never were known before.

These men, women, and aliens are called Explorers.

SEEKERS AND FINDERS

Those who quest to reach and to find are a bold, adventurous lot. They may not always have the noblest intentions; some, in fact, see the discoveries of the galaxy as treasures to plunder and personal glory to heap upon themselves. Yet no one can question their courage and daring, for they lead the way to places unknown and full of danger, revealing to the rest of the galactic citizenry what secrets and wonders the universe yet holds for all.

Building a character with a focus on exploration means thinking about how he can contribute to a group even though he's likely had a solitary background. He's sure to be knowledgeable about things no one else is, especially where new locations and frontier travels are concerned. He's probably got enough experience with taking care of himself to be useful in a fight, but many of his contributions will be in getting around, knowing about what is found once he gets there, and dealing with the unique challenges that get in the way of the journey.

THE PATH TO EXPLORATION

In the **Edge of the Empire** Core Rulebook, the Explorer career is introduced along with many others. This chapter presents a number of new options for anyone wishing to play out such a career, perhaps with a different approach from what has come before.

First, the player is presented with new backgrounds and Obligations. As in the main book, backgrounds are simply narratives that get into the history of the character, explaining where he came from, how he learned the things he knows, and what led him to his current place in the galaxy. Obligations play a much more specific role in a character's life, impacting him in negative ways if they are not dealt with yet enabling him to access greater resources by taking them on. In addition to those found in **Edge of the Empire,** there are new Obligations presented here that are customized to Explorer-style characters.

This book also introduces three new species for players to choose from. Though they are presented here as choices for the Explorer career, they can work for any other career choice as well. The new species include the far-flung Chiss, the driven Duros, and the perplexing Toydarians.

Players will also find new specializations opened up to the Explorer career. **Edge of the Empire** presented the Fringer, the Scout, and the Trader. **Enter the Unknown** gives players access to the Archaeologist, the Big-Game Hunter, and the Driver. These new specializations can be fantastic starting points for beginning characters or new options to further develop more experienced heroes.

Of course, with new specializations come new talents and this chapter describes these new knacks and abilities in detail.

What truly drives many Explorers may well be considerably different from the Motivations of other callings. In addition to the core Motivations presented in **Edge of the Empire**, a new driving force is introduced that is unique to the hearts and minds of Explorers: that of Discovery. A new chart is given on which to roll, as well as thorough explanations for how the Motivation applies to the life and story of the Explorer.

Just as Explorers live to discover new places and beings in the galaxy, so too does this book introduce a new concept for players to enhance their character development. Signature abilities present new three-row advancement trees unique to specific careers, and these trees are added to the bottom of existing talent trees for a career's specializations. Each such tree provides a single new and powerful ability to a character, and all of the advancement options in the special tree are devoted to enhancing and upgrading that ability. In this book, two such signature abilities are provided for the specializations of the Explorer career.

This section delves into many kinds of backgrounds for Explorers, as well as the Obligations that both drive and plague them on their journeys.

EXPLORER BACKGROUNDS

Character backgrounds are very much a matter of personal choice and can be as varied as the galaxy itself. Establishing the background for a character sets the stage upon which the player will tell his story.

All people, to a great degree, are defined by their pasts: experiences, traumas, education, victories, training, and so much more help to shape attitudes, goals, and needs. Going through the process of thinking about and crafting a background enables a player to make cogent and consistent decisions about everything else to do with the character.

The character's species is the first natural choice and is inherently intertwined with the background construction. Often (though not always), a character's place of birth is readily determined by the species choice, as well as his early history and experiences. Parents, siblings, extended family, and friends are all viable—and often vital—parts of a strong, complete background.

Consider Luke Skywalker and his early history on Tatooine. His upbringing by Uncle Owen and Aunt Beru, his strong friendship with Biggs, and his yearning for something more all stem from him being a human raised on the far-flung distant world where non-human aliens actually wield the real power. Delving even further back, there is the true and tragic history of his birth to humans of great power and influence, mired in the conflict of a galaxy coming apart in flames.

As with Luke (or any character, minor or major, who ever appeared in the *Star Wars* story), a character's background will inform every other decision about what he knows and what he can do. This includes career choice, selections of skills and specializations, what kinds of Obligations are incurred, and the character's Motivations.

What follows are a number of background suggestions, with a summary of how they can be used

in building an Explorer character. This is a far more *detailed presentation of the concept of backgrounds* than is found in **Edge of the Empire**; as with everything else about this book, the intent is to more deeply examine the Explorer career. Including these sample background ideas is a part of that goal, empowering players with more ideas and information to help them fully flesh out their own characters.

These background ideas should be taken as inspiration and jumping-off points for the creative process of crafting a unique background tailored to the player's desired character. There are certainly many more concepts and ideas to play with and each player should feel free to craft whatever details best serve the story he wishes to play out. In addition, the background constructed for a character should go a long way toward explaining both his Motivation and his Obligation, among other factors.

ACADEMIC

For the student who seeks history, science, and other knowledge beyond the halls of academia, the stars can be an undeniable siren's song. First-hand experience can mean the difference between theoretical knowledge and true understanding, and the academic who understands the importance of the latter is the true master of his field.

True exploration requires an appreciation for all that is already known, as well as a desire to add to that knowledge. An Explorer with a strong foundation in academia is armed with the knowledge to see himself and his team safely through many situations in which ignorance is a lethal failing. Big guns, fast ships, and all the credits in the galaxy cannot overcome a problem if there isn't sufficient understanding of what the problem is.

Most academics learn quickly that life out in the Rim requires adaptation and versatility. One learns how to fight, how to survive, and many other skills as necessary if he doesn't want to end up a footnote in someone's journal. One also learns to make the right kinds of friends, trading knowledge for protection and expertise for mutual benefit.

Fringers frequently come from less adventurous backgrounds, taking what they knew and learned before and adding it to what they need to know to survive. An academic who finds himself on the Rim may well take his versatility as a learned man and apply it to his approach to making his way through life, which is exactly what a Fringer does. A scholastically minded Fringer may be just the perfect addition to any team trying to make a living away from the Core.

Scouts with academic interest in planets, astronomy, *and related subjects are not hard to imagine.* Ready to live instead of simply study, an academic may well find his way into a Scout service of some kind or even strike out on his own, just to experience all that he has read about and to discover newer, more interesting, results. The wise Scout combines an appreciation of the study of geology, climate, and other subjects with the practical experience of being there.

Traders who understand the grander scope of interstellar economics may well have a tremendous upper hand in commerce. Reaching out to a nascent civilization to bring trade to it, the academically minded Trader is likely to reap the maximum long-term rewards for his efforts. An interesting background could be the radical economist, determined to change how mercantile systems work, making his way to the Outer Rim to prove his theories.

Archaeologists inherently possess a scholarly background, making this almost a default part of any history for a character of this type. The study of history, ancient civilizations, and related topics requires a great deal of in-depth research and academic focus before taking a single step into the field. Simply put, no Archaeologist is going to be worth a gundark's broken tooth if he doesn't start out with at least some academic foundation.

Big-Game Hunters might not seem like the scholarly types, but something can be said for knowing all there is to know about one's prey and its habitat. Thinking of things the other way around, who best to teach a class on the ecology of the rancor than someone who has hunted and fought one to the death? One interesting background to consider is the conservation-minded academic who takes to the field to track and find exotic alien beasts. Perhaps he does so not to kill them but to learn more about them and ensure their continued existence as civilization expands into their habitats.

Drivers are probably the least likely to come from an academic background, but it's not impossible to come up with a story that makes sense. For example, imagine a scientist who designs the latest power systems and insists on testing them himself in the harshest field conditions. Perhaps his ideas are too radical, and he needs a team to help him take a prototype to the Outer Rim to truly prove the concept, far away from the prying eyes of Imperial watchdogs.

CRIMINAL

The reasons for pursuing a life of crime are as varied as the types of crime one can commit. Some are born into it. Some find it the only way to survive. Some are anxious to grab the "quick score" rather than work for a living. Some pursue crime as a way of life, understanding that it is a profession like any other and indeed one that requires immense skill and a little luck.

Naturally, the farther one travels from the center of Imperial power, the easier a life of criminal activity can be. Criminals may well become Explorers due to sheer necessity, mastering the skills and talents required to find places to hide, ways to pursue their agendas, and means to survive and thrive.

Additionally, the life of a criminal is not often one that is consciously chosen; instead, it is thrust upon a person because he has a horrible streak of bad luck, winding up in the wrong place at the wrong time. Grasping at any means of survival is the natural response, yet it can be nearly impossible to escape the life of a criminal once that path is chosen.

Fringers are, by their nature, likely candidates for the life of a criminal. Inherently opportunistic, Fringers often fail to see the law as anything but a barrier to whatever goal they have in mind. Skilled at navigating the edges of society, Fringers actually make excellent criminal operatives. They tend to know where to go, who to talk to, what's of value, and how best to get to it. They also tend to be able to fill in many of the gaps a group may have in their ability pool when planning a caper.

Scouts can find themselves on the wrong side of the law simply by discovering something the Empire (or local law-enforcement officials) doesn't want found. Seeing too much or asking the wrong questions—these activities can get a Scout into a great deal of trouble and possibly hunted by Imperial Intelligence. Then there are Scouts who, while working for one employer, sell the information they've discovered to other factions. That kind of double-dealing can lead to all manner of legal trouble.

Traders quite frequently face the slippery slope of temptation by cheating customers or by working out deals that bend the law too far. Those that take such shortcuts one too many times discover they are no longer honest businessmen, that they are instead walking the road of a crooked dealer. This doesn't have to be a death sentence for their career; there are plenty of folks, especially in the distant places of the galaxy, who need to do business with those not afraid to smuggle, lie, and cheat to get what is needed where it needs to go. Criminal Traders are often the only option those in the frontier areas have to conduct necessary transactions.

Archaeologists are not always of pure heart and noble of purpose. More than a few see uncovering ancient artifacts as a means to financial reward, and they are willing to break both taboos and laws to get what they want. They will sell to the highest bidder, even if it means a priceless heirloom goes hidden into some greedy aristocrat's vault instead of being shared with the galaxy. Then again, an Archaeologist doesn't necessarily have to possess a dark heart to become a criminal; just poking into the wrong tomb on the wrong planet at the wrong time can set him on the fugitive's path.

Big-Game Hunters frequently find trouble when their hunt takes them into restricted areas. Killing a massive and dangerous beast may mean a great moment of glory for the hunter, but doing so on lands belonging to the local lord can carry a death sentence. Of course, being particularly skilled at hunting the strongest and most dangerous creatures in the galaxy means Big-Game Hunters make prime candidates for recruitment in hunting more sentient prey, and criminal overlords may pay quite handsomely to eliminate particularly tough foes.

Drivers are greatly valued by most criminal organizations and enterprises; after all, after every caper there is the need to get away quickly and cleanly. Out in the frontier areas, many Drivers discover that legitimate jobs are few and far between (and often boring), while the truly lucrative opportunities to employ their gifts come with working for those on the wrong side of the law. What's more, the very idea of speed limits and traffic regulations is anathema to a Driver, so he is likely to have a number of traffic violations on his record wherever he goes.

ENTREPRENEUR

The galaxy is overflowing with opportunities for those willing to search for them. The best of those opportunities—especially for someone with more imagination than money—can be found far from the galactic center, where societies and technology are still developing.

A successful Entrepreneur in the outer reaches will surround himself with a team possessed of various skills. He may have a business plan, or he may simply seize upon whatever jumps out at him as he explores his environment. Regardless, Entrepreneurs who leave the safety and security of the Core Worlds are true pioneers, and they have to be adaptable and quick on their feet to survive, much less to thrive.

The old saying about larger risks being necessary for larger rewards holds especially true for the Entrepreneur who explores opportunities in the far corners of the galaxy. Of course, without a great deal of luck and a few allies, the penalty for failure can be quite lethal.

Fringers are naturals when it comes to entrepreneurship. Always seeking opportunities, they are often gifted deal-makers and savvy about who to talk to for whatever they need. A Fringer tends to be adept at seeing a need; he may not have all the skills or resources to fulfill that need, but he's sure to know how to go about finding the people who do. Fringers tend to be "idea people," and if one cannot find a place in the Core Worlds to make the most of his talents, he'll head out to the farther worlds where people like him can thrive. Often he'll look for whatever problem he can find and then go about trying to figure out the best way to turn it into a fruitful business.

Scouts aren't normally seen as particularly entrepreneurial, but they can be in a unique position to offer services not readily available from others. Often the first ones to see a planet, asteroid, or other stellar phenomenon, Scouts can levy such discoveries into highly lucrative opportunities. A Scout setting out on his own might do well for himself by putting a good team together, finding out what factions and corporations are looking for in the way of planetary resources, and endeavoring to find such assets. As large as the galaxy is, the pool to search from is nearly infinite.

Traders are almost by definition entrepreneurs, regardless of whatever else may be driving them to explore the galaxy. A Trader making his own way among the stars is constantly on the lookout for business opportunities, even when he's not in a particularly strong position to take advantage of them at the moment, he'll take note of the information for later exploitation.

Archaeologists are not usually entrepreneurs at heart, but there are plenty who follow that calling who are more than happy to find ways to make money at it. Ancient civilizations—and the knowledge, technology, and potential secrets of power they hold—are highly valuable to governments, corporations, and other factions. Like a Scout, a savvy Archaeologist may well put a solid team together to go out and find treasures that can net a tidy profit.

Big-Game Hunters often make their way leading safari-style expeditions for rich nobles and businessmen who fancy themselves great predators. This is how best to make enough money to go after the prey they truly seek. Others act as bounty hunters, knowing their skill sets are compatible with that line of work; it may not be exactly what they seek to do, but it pays the bills. A smart hunter who heads out to the Rim or beyond goes with a plan to keep his funds up so that he can stay on the prowl of the galaxy's greatest threats and challenges.

Drivers know their skills sets are in high demand throughout the galaxy, so many of them specifically go into business for themselves as professionals. Many prefer to maintain a distance from their clients; they only want to know what they are driving, where they are going, and how they are getting paid. Others will





contract on a long-term basis with a client, usually with a stronger idea of who and what they are transporting. Of course, combat-oriented Drivers can usually make decent money as specialized mercenaries.

EX-IMPERIAL OPERATOR

The Empire's bureaucracy and its military employ billions of beings. The vast majority are happy with their lot in life, even under the harsh rule of the Emperor.

Yet there are plenty who, for one reason or another, find themselves departed from their service. Some are simply fired. Others leave Imperial service hoping for something more. More than a few find reasons to escape serving the Empire because their freedom, or even their very lives, depend on it.

The safety of such a move depends a great deal upon what kind of role the character played within the Empire before his departure. A minor functionary with little access to important information will probably be able to simply quit or resign, moving on to private pursuits. Someone who knows where bodies are buried and who did what to whom as the Empire rose to power, however, may find his way out very difficult indeed.

Fringers with this background likely operated as contractors to one Imperial agency or another; never truly a part of the Empire, they found reason to stop working for such a lucrative employer and move on to other opportunities. Perhaps one ran afoul of someone of importance and decided removing himself from the reach of his antagonist was the right decision. Then again, a Fringer may still be working for the Empire, out in the far reaches seeking something that will be the key to his freedom or his fortune.

Scouts serve the Empire by the thousands as part of survey teams continuously expanding the boundaries and influence of the most powerful entity in the galaxy. Working under the constant interference of Imperial bureaucrats chafes too much for some, or they may decide too many policies and strictures make their service miserable to perform. Sometimes, a Scout comes across a planet where terrible atrocities are being committed in the name of the Emperor; such an accidental discovery may well drive him to make his way into the galactic frontier to disappear.

Traders may have been bureaucrats of some kind, ensuring the Empire received its due in the form of taxes, fees, and penalties from merchants and mercantile consortiums in various corners of the galaxy. Perhaps one saw an opportunity that could be best exploited if he went independent, taking all he had learned as an inspector or tax collector and employing it to start a business all his own. Alternatively, such a functionary might find himself simply removed from his cushy Imperial post, and now he's forced to search for opportunities among the stars.

Archaeologists are often employed by the Empire to find and uncover the knowledge and secrets of the countless civilizations that existed prior to the Empire. Such knowledge may need to be suppressed, of course, should it not fall in line with the current propaganda, yet it is still important to know everything possible about the planets and cultures absorbed. Some such Archaeologists may find the suppression of their life's work too much to take, thus seeking to strike out on their own to find and reveal the truths they discover. Perhaps one such Archaeologist may discover rumors and evidence of a powerful ancient culture that directly undermines Imperial doctrine and, knowing the Empire will do all it can to wipe any trace of the offending culture out, he decides to break out on his own to get there first.

Big-Game Hunters may well start out as members of the Imperial military structure, discovering a taste for hunting and killing particularly nasty beasts while occupying or pacifying a particular planet. They may have been special forces of some kind, in charge of advance action in an area or perhaps even members of the Scout Service, with a particular specialty in dealing with hostile fauna. However one served, he may have determined that the challenge of the hunt outweighed any other ambitions he had. Whether he retired or simply abandoned his post, he's set off for the faraway planets to offer his hunting and combat skills in exchange for a chance to take on the galaxy's most dangerous beasts.

Drivers are employed by the millions in the Empire, operating every form of vehicle imaginable. Speeders, ground rovers, walkers, swoops—all these and more are part of the Imperial war machine, not to mention normal day-to-day business operations. As with all Imperial institutions, there are strictures, policies, and regulations for everything, which can be painfully inhibiting to someone who truly wishes to let loose and push his vehicle beyond its alleged limits. Unfortunately, skilled technicians in any role tend to be greatly valued by the Empire, especially if they know a great deal about high-end machinery that shouldn't be shared with the galaxy at large. Such a Driver may well find his way as far out into the frontier as possible, where he can find an old classic of a speeder, enhance its performance, and show the rustics what a great machine with a great Driver can really do.

FALLEN NOBLE

There are millions—perhaps billions—of noble families throughout the galaxy, and quite a few of them have black sheep. An aristocrat with a poor reputation finds life in the Core Worlds difficult, perhaps even impossible. The outer reaches offer opportunities for redemption, or at least a chance to start over, for the noble who needs to escape scandal or worse.

Nobles rarely have to pursue any kind of profession. Many, however, enjoy various hobbies and intellectual pursuits, which they invariably learn how to parley into an actual occupation once forced out of their comfortable lifestyles. Naturally, a noble may have to engage in a great deal of on-the-job training to really understand his pursuits. Necessity can be a wonderful motivator in such circumstances.

Whether others even know if one is a noble has a lot to do with the measures he takes to maintain that secret. He may decide that being open about it will somehow give him advantages when dealing with others. If he's smart, however, he will likely go out of his way to suppress that part of his background, preferring to avoid attention on his troubled past.

Fringers come from all walks of life, so it would not be at all surprising for one to turn out to have connections to nobility as part of his history. The dilettante nature of most nobles flows well into a Fringer lifestyle, where being a jack-of-all-trades is the choice path. A combination of connections, charisma, and commitment is exactly what a fallen noble will need as he makes his way out to the Rim.

Scouts tend to come from more working-class backgrounds, but it's entirely possible a displaced aristocrat might find himself with a ship and an education in planetology. The right knowledge and resources may well lead him to the life of a Scout, and the general solitude and avoidance of cities and civilization (where he is more likely to be recognized by those he'd rather avoid) can be appealing for a fallen noble. Further, the life of a Scout may enable a noble to regain some of what he's lost, either by discovering vastly valuable resources or even laying claim to a planet upon which to build his own dynasty.

Traders have a great need for diplomatic skills and connections, and someone from the upper crust of the Empire is bound to have plenty of both. A fallen noble might yet have access to enough resources to start up a business, which is a natural path for one who was born to lead. Some nobles come from great mercantile empires anyway, so even on the outs with their families, they are still Traders by nature.

Archaeologists are inherently well educated, which is also true of the aristocracy in many cultures. Archaeology is a favorite pastime of the rich and powerful, so a noble who is fallen from grace might find that what was once a passionate hobby is now an option for making a living. A possible twist on that theme is a noble who, due to his obsession with rumors of a great lost treasure, finds himself on the outs with his family. To redeem himself, he sets out among the stars to prove them all wrong and return to even greater heights.



Big-Game Hunters frequently come from the upper crust of society; aristocrats are the ones with the resources and leisure time to go out and hunt wild beasts for fun. The desire to dominate all other creatures in order to establish primacy as a predator is a common part of the noble psyche, and one who finds himself on the outs of the society he was once a master of will understandably seek to further his sense of power by continuing the hunt for dangerous game.

Drivers usually have an addiction to speed and a fascination with machines. As with the Big-Game Hunter, a noble may decide that he derives a sense of power over his environment by mastering machines of motion. Winning races in a Podracer or on a swoop has that element of danger that truly appeals to those who have everything. When one loses everything, he may well take his talents and experience with those same machines out to the Rim to discover a path for himself in his fallen state.

WANDERER

Curiosity? Boredom? Tragic circumstance? A desire for something more? Whatever it is that drives someone to wander away from his home and set out among the stars, it must be a powerful force to overcome the fear of the unknown. Most beings are simply overwhelmed by the sheer vastness of the galaxy, much less the uncountable dangers they must face each day as they ramble across the hyperlanes from planet to planet. The hardy soul who does so merely because he is drawn to is either exceptionally brave or a touch mad. Perhaps he is both.

Fringers are the most likely of all Explorer specializations to come from a wanderer background. Their diverse skills and talents indicate a journey along many different roads, experiencing the many vistas and challenges of a meandering traveler. Hitching rides on freighters, working whatever jobs he can at each destination, a wandering Fringer can find himself anywhere, especially on the Rim.

Scouts are practically wanderers by profession, albeit with at least some idea of a direction in which to head. With a history of extensive travel, someone who has wandered the Rim might well develop the piloting and other skill sets that are ideal to a Scout. Clearly, someone of that mind-set is well suited to a life of always moving on to the next planet, never really putting down roots.

Traders in the outer reaches of the galaxy make their livings by going from planet to planet, space station to starport, carrying goods to those who want them and buying supplies to sell elsewhere. The mentality of a wanderer is well suited to such a life, especially if the wanderer actually enjoys dealing with other people. A classic sort of background would be the wanderer who started the habit of bringing things needed to the places he was traveling and one day realized he'd taken up the Trader profession without really intending to.

Archaeologists can easily evolve from a background of wandering. As a restless soul traveling the Rim, coming across ancient ruins and hidden places as his feet took him there, someone could develop a keen interest to uncover and learn more. It may make for an interesting story should a group go looking for a particular site of ruins and are repeatedly told to find the "grungy guy with the strange metal pole" who wanders through the area regularly, speaking often about his latest finds.

Big-Game Hunters may well have been merely wanderers who found themselves constantly in battle with powerful, vicious creatures along the way. As dangerous as the galaxy is, a true traveler of random roads would need to learn how to survive and thrive in truly difficult situations, lest his journey be brought to a brutal and messy end. He may have never intended to become an expert killer of the galaxy's most terrifying monsters, but that doesn't mean he won't be called on by others who hear of his extraordinary success at navigating deadly areas.

Drivers can easily be wanderers who simply wanted to cover ground more effectively. After all, knowing how to handle vehicles across the worst terrain means the wanderer need never worry about having his path blocked; all ways are open to him. Knowing how to handle machines well is also a great set of skills to barter passage with when he wants to make his way to the next planet on his journey.

EXPLORER OBLIGATIONS

In the Core Rulebook for **Edge of the Empire,** Obligations are presented as a key part of a character's foundation. They are part of the reason why the character lives the way he does, eking out a living on the fringes of society and staying only one step ahead of his debts and responsibilities. They tie him to the greater galaxy and potentially to other party members, in addition to plaguing the group when his particular Obligation comes knocking.

Enter the Unknown modifies the original Obligations chart to better apply specifically to the Explorer career. In this way, players of Explorers can randomize their Obligation with a higher chance of getting results that make sense for them while having some interesting and more applicable new options from which to select.

Characters that are already in play shouldn't need to reconstruct their Obligations, at least not without a good, in-story reason. However, if players and the GM work it out, some of the new options presented here can become new Obligations incurred as a result of new story arcs. As with all things in gaming, whatever works best for the players and their GM is acceptable.

Some explanations of each of the presented Obligations may be found on **Table 1–1: Explorer Obligations**, especially as they might apply to an Explorer. This table is a modified version of the Obligation table from the Core Rulebook, adapted to include the new Explorer-centric options, Fervor and Sponsorship.

TABLE 1-1: EXPLORER OBLIGATIONS

d100 roll	Obligation Type
01-06	**Addiction:** This is often thought of in terms of a substance of some kind or a compulsion to act in a destructive manor (as with gambling). For example, the Trader may have an addiction to "the Deal," always needing to make arrangements and work the numbers. A Big-Game Hunter may be addicted to "the Hunt," never happy unless he's on the ground, weapon in hand, on the trail of something. Drivers are often adrenaline junkies, addicted to speed and performance from their machines. Obsession is another way to portray some of these concepts.
07-14	**Betrayal:** As an Obligation, Betrayal tends to work in the direction of the character having betrayed someone and having to either avoid the consequences for it or having to somehow pay for his sin (Motivation works better for a character who has been betrayed). An Explorer may have taken up the career to travel far away from those he betrayed. Alternatively, he may have double-crossed on a deal of some kind or tried to get away with selling important information to one too many sources. Fringers, Traders, Scouts, and Archaeologists are especially prone to the latter.
15-22	**Blackmail:** An ancient custom that seems never to lose its power to make people act against their will. For an Explorer, there are many interesting and creative ways it may apply. A Trader may have a history of skimmed profits to hide. An Archaeologist may have once plagiarized someone's findings for a presentation to secure funding. A Big-Game Hunter may have once killed someone on a hunt, never knowing someone else recorded the incident. A Driver may have fudged the data on a particular machine he was hired to test, only to have a number of deaths result from his faulty information. Such incidents can weigh heavily on the mind and heart of a being.
23-30	**Bounty:** A Bounty on one's head is a powerful agitator for driving action. Many of the infractions described under Blackmail could well result in a Bounty being offered for an Explorer. Other circumstances for which a Bounty might be placed on an Explorer include the following: a Fringer being in the wrong place at the wrong time; a Trader failing in just the wrong delivery to just the wrong official; an Archaeologist trespassing across the wrong lands; a Driver swiping the wrong hot swoop; and so on.
31-38	**Criminal:** This usually means the character is in the employ of, or seriously indebted to, a crime lord or illicit organization of some kind. Explorers working in the Rim often discover their best—and sometimes only—opportunities to employ their skills are by working with one or more criminal groups. Unfortunately, this usually places them in trouble with whatever law-enforcement officials there are in the area, their only protection being those same criminal contacts. Such relationships can become vicious circles that are impossible to break. Consider the Scout who is wanted for too many trips to interdicted planets or the Driver who only avoids incarceration for grand theft because of the influence his criminal employer has with local security forces.
39-48	**Debt:** A Trader may well be up to his eyeballs in debt thanks to too many failed shipments, while an Archaeologist may have risked everything on a find he still can't track down. A Big-Game Hunter may have a great kit for the hunt, but he borrowed to the hilt to get it, and a Driver may have the hottest speeder in the quadrant yet owe thousands of credits to the local sharks for all the mods he's made.
49-57	**Family:** Ties of kinship can exert an incredible pull on most beings, perhaps even serving as the main reason someone chooses the life of an Explorer—to get away from domineering parents or other powerful relatives. There are times, however, when an Explorer may be doing what he does for his family and not despite them. Perhaps a Fringer sees wandering the Rim as a way to return his family to some kind of prominence after a terrible fall. Maybe the lifelong search of an Archaeologist revolves around the ancient homelands of his people. Meanwhile, a Big-Game Hunter may follow in his father's footsteps, determined to exceed the old man's accomplishments.
58-66	**Favor:** Some say that favors are what truly drives the galaxy; many will happily provide enormous assets and support, all for the simple price to be named later, often at the worst times. A Scout in the middle of a vital mission for some local rebels is suddenly called on to deliver the location of their base. An Archaeologist in the midst of celebrating his greatest discovery ever is informed that he now must bury that discovery and never speak of it again. A Driver, about to race against the best in the sector, is coerced into losing the race to "clear the books."
67-74	**Fervor:** The character is possessed of a powerful drive to act based on religious or spiritual beliefs. As an Obligation, Fervor means that he cannot resist acting in accordance with his beliefs and teachings. He may even have those who support him in some way (thus explaining the resources he potentially attains due to the Obligation), further exhorting him to follow "the Way" they all revere. Consider the Archaeologist who seeks temples dedicated to a lost god or the Big-Game Hunter who truly believes that it is his divine destiny to eradicate "monsters" throughout the galaxy.
75-82	**Obsession:** Similar to Addiction in some ways, at least at the psychological level—it's easy to see how many Explorers are driven by an Obsession of some kind to push far out into the Rim in pursuit of an all-consuming goal. Consider the Trader who can never acquire enough wealth or the Scout who must categorize every planet in a given sector. What of the Big-Game Hunter, determined to once and for all take out a creature believed long extinct or even mythical? A Driver obsessed with going ever faster may truly bring himself to untold ruin—even death—for his Obsession.
83-96	**Sponsorship:** This represents a legitimate faction that has placed a great deal of resources in the hands of a character (or a team) for some established purpose. For many Explorers, it is the most common Obligation they will incur. It could be a mercantile consortium that sponsors a Trader in order to open up trade with a new planet or civilization or an Imperial agency sponsoring a Scout to investigate a newly discovered star and its planets. Archaeologists are frequently sponsored by academies or other scholastically minded organizations for their expeditions, and Big-Game Hunters may well be sponsored by a conservation group to thin a particular population of beasts...or sponsored by less savory firms to completely eradicate a particular life-form.
97-00	Roll twice on this chart. The character's starting Obligation is split equally into two different origins.

NEW SPECIES

The galaxy has countless beings in it from a wide array of species. A large number of those species have come to one level of prominence or another over the course of time, each adding its distinctive qualities and philosophies to the character of galactic civilization. Though the Empire is very humancentric, with less humanlike beings treated as second-class citizens (or worse), out in the Rim everyone has a fairly equal opportunity to seek their fortunes and achieve what they desire.

The Explorer career is open to any species, and those that follow are three new ones that are particularly well suited to the many paths an Explorer might take: the Chiss, the Duros, and the Toydarian. The Chiss are a rare sight, hailing from the Unknown Regions, and those that do make their way to the galaxy proper are vagabonds by nature. Duros would be generally welcome in the Core Worlds, though the people of that species have little desire to mix and mingle among the Imperial elite, instead taking to the stars. Finally, Toydarians can be found in profit-seeking ventures in the markets and enterprises on any world.

CHISS

With a profound respect for art and creative achievements, the Chiss explore the mysteries of the galaxy while maintaining their own mysteries about their origins. They excel at problem solving and strategic thinking, and their compatibility with both humans and non-humans make them excellent bridges between disparate cultures.

Physiology: Near-humans with dark-blue skin and glowing red eyes, the Chiss tend to run to the tall side of the human body type. Their skin color and eyes grow more intense the greater concentration of oxygen they are in. On average, Chiss tend to be more physically fit and overall more attractive than regular humans, assuming one is not thrown off by the skin and eyes. Their hair is universally jet black, save for the silvering found in those of advanced age.

Genetic analysis reveals that the Chiss are an offshoot of humanity, most likely dating back to the earliest eras of expansionism. Millennia of subterranean living altered their biology considerably. Not only did it result



Chiss

Duros

Toydarian

in the shift of their appearance from standard human but also their greater strength, endurance, and other physical qualities over baseline humans. They also reach physical maturity much more rapidly; most are physically and emotionally mature by their early teens, and on average, Chiss live about 80 standard years.

Society: Cautious, thoughtful, and highly cultured, the Chiss have generally kept to themselves as a civilization for much of their long history. Rare individuals venture forth from the Chiss Ascendancy, as most prefer to keep to the security of a society they revere as superior. Art, culture, intellectual advancement, and discipline are highly prized qualities among the Chiss, and they have worked hard to build a society that relies not upon economic achievement but upon personal growth and contributions to the society as a whole.

Those Chiss that do venture into the galaxy at large do so generally with a profound respect for their peoples' desire to remain apart from the Empire and its struggles. Few beings outside of the Chiss even know where the Ascendancy is, which is the preferred state of affairs for them. Individual Chiss see the chance for great personal growth among the stars, as well as a chance to learn many things they can take back to their people.

Homeworld: Though most Chiss believe their world was a kind of tropical paradise when their ancestors first landed on it, the planet of Csilla entered a full-bore ice age nearly 5,000 years ago. Glaciers ultimately claimed the surface of the world, driving the technologically advanced people belowground. There, in thousands of warrens built to manage resources and energy effectively, with extensive networks of passages to keep the civilization connected and unified, the Chiss have thrived as a species.

Language: Though any Explorer Chiss will know Basic, he's also fluent in a language only a member of his species can speak properly—Cheunh. Though Chiss are biologically connected to and similar to humans in most ways, they possess certain variances in their vocal apparatus that permit sounds and textures to their speech that make for a language many other species find strangely beautiful to hear. The structure of the language, steeped in context-derived combinations of words for idea expression, as well as the unique nature of Chiss vocal abilities, necessitated their adoption of trade languages. Sy Bisti and Minnisiat served the species well after they first reached outward from their homeworld, Csilla.

Life on the Fringe: Despite the mysteriousness of their origins and home, Chiss are often valued for their temperament, intellect, and laser-like focus on solving problems. Being near-humans, Chiss have only very slight difficulty dealing with most Imperial operatives and bureaucrats, which can be an asset for any group of mostly non-human aliens that must interact with the Empire in some way.

COLD AND CALCULATING

Chiss are known for their patience and tactical aptitude, always acting with their opponent's next move (or three) in mind. In the Academy and Aristocra, youths are taught to painstakingly analyze the situation in order to formulate the most precise and effective response. This has resulted in a cultural taboo against preemptive strikes, so much so that an unprovoked advance during conflicts and war can result in exile from the Ascendency.

A player could role-play this tendency either way. An archetypical Chiss might wait until the very last moment to draw his blaster, ensuring that all possible alternatives are exhausted before resorting to violence. On the other hand, a rebellious or unorthodox Chiss may leverage the stereotype to his advantage, striking first when his opponent least expects it.

RACIAL ABILITIES



- **Wound Threshold:** 10 + Brawn
- **Strain Threshold:** 10 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 100 XP
- **Special Abilities:** Chiss begin the game with one rank in Cool. They still may not train Cool above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Infravision:** Chiss have adapted to be able to see in both the infrared and normal visual spectra. This enables Chiss characters to remove up to ■ added to checks by lighting conditions.

DUROS

The species most often celebrated as granting the gift of hyperspace travel to the rest of the galaxy, Duros are revered as pilots, explorers, and storytellers. They are also widely sought after as ships engineers and mechanics.

Physiology: Descended from reptiles, Duros are bipedal humanoids with large red eyes; smooth blue-green skin; long fingers; bald, bulbous heads; and tiny slits below the eyes that provide their olfactory sense. Their young hatch as larvae from eggs laid by the females, but they are raised in a recognizable family unit. Duros aren't particularly brawny, but they possess sharp minds and keen intellects. Both males and females are bald, but other characteristics distinguish the sexes.

Society: Most scholars believe the Duros actually invented the first hyperdrive craft, and their contri-

butions to interstellar navigation are impossible to overstate. They are inquisitive and adventurous, taking great pride in their extensive travels throughout the galaxy. It is considered polite to refer to any Duros by the honorific "Traveler," such is their passion for astrogation and exploration of the galaxy.

With a history of enslavement by beings of great technological prowess and the capacity for terrible destruction in the name of advancing their empire, the Duros developed a profound thirst for knowledge of the very science being used to subdue them. When the time came, they employed all they learned to not only throw off the shackles of their oppressors but to reach out to the stars and never look back. Shortly thereafter, the course of Duros society was charted by a highly regarded monarchy, but as that once-great dynasty fell to corruption, enduring Duros pragmatism led to a corporatocracy that focused on asset management and development.

In the era of the Empire, the Duros have not fared well. Their home—long devastated by unchecked pollution from rampant industrialization—has become an occupied territory, their resources managed by the Imperial bureaucracy. Many Duros have chosen to scatter to the Outer Rim rather than be enslaved by the Emperor's war machine, where there are still those who value the gifts and knowledge they bring.

Homeworld: Duro was once a lush, green world. Due to ecological disasters on an extinction scale, it is now completely uninhabitable without extensive biohazard protections. Hungry to reach out far and wide to the galaxy, the Duros allowed manufacturing, mining, and production to go unchecked and unregulated. The resultant pollutants and hazardous wastes ultimately drove them from their homeworld to live in massive orbital cities and space stations all around the planet.

NEIGHBORLY RIVALRY

Both Duros and Corellians are known as peerless pilots and skillful shipwrights throughout the galaxy, but during the New Order the Empire sought to inflame that rivalry into outright animosity, primarily by annexing the planet Duro into the Corellian sector.

Duros pride themselves on their natural talents for astrogation and their legacy as the inventors of the hyperdrive. To be stripped of their independent status and relegated to mere subjects of another system was a slap in the face to the free-spirited species.

Tensions with humans, and Corellians in particular, have risen in recent years, to the point where some Duros will use the term "mammals" to refer to any nonreptilian species in a derogatory, condescending fashion.

Language: Using a syllable-driven written component, Durese (also called Durosian) is a well-known and widely spoken language throughout the Corellian Sector and many other Core Worlds. It is one of the foundation languages for the construction of Basic.

Life on the Fringe: Almost all Duros posses some skill with piloting spacecraft, making them valuable to nearly any group or faction. Duros are one of the species truly born to the Explorer career, and they remain the guides to the stars they have always been.

RACIAL ABILITIES



- **Wound Threshold:** 11 + Brawn
- **Strain Threshold:** 10 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 100 XP
- **Special Abilities:** Duros begin the game with one rank in Piloting (Space). They still may not train Piloting (Space) above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Intuitive Navigation:** Duros may add ◉ to all Astrogation checks they make.

TOYDARIANS

Prideful, stubborn, and strong willed, Toydarians are merchants and opportunity seekers who roam the galaxy searching out their fortunes. Their reputations for bad tempers and con jobs, as well as a history of being lackeys for the Hutts, makes for difficult going for many Toydarians, but their resistance to Force manipulation is seen by many others as highly valuable.

Physiology: Toydarians have smallish, squat bodies that perpetually hover over the ground, thanks to a pair of wings on their back and an abundance of natural gasses absorbed into their frames. Stubby protruding snouts dominate their craggy faces, and their spindly arms and legs end with three fingers and three toes, respectively. One of their most interesting physical features has to do with their brains; they are completely immune to any manipulations via the Force.

Toydarians have extremely active metabolisms, and physical exertion of any kind burns up massive amounts of calories. As such, they are in constant need of food, eating large quantities throughout the day. Where available, Toydarians take advantage of highly concentrated processed foods that quickly fulfill their energy needs. In ancient times, Toydarian tribes fought most over food supplies.

Toydarians are well known for having a natural body odor similar to sweetspice, making them pleasant to be around for at least their effect on the local air.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE

Toydarian civilization consists of a feudal vassal system ruled over by a king. Members of Toydarian nobility constantly vie with one another for their lord's favor and personal prestige, believing the constant bickering to be a way to sort out the loyal from the treacherous, the weak from the strong, the crafty from the crude.

Some members of the species take to this sort of competition effortlessly, and the power struggle permeates down to the lowest strata of society. Others resist the constant jockeying for supremacy and strike out on their own, determined to be the masters of their own domains.

Society: The Hutts subjugated the Toydarians long ago, yet it had little negative impact on their society's development. Effectively a grand business merger, the Toydarians enjoyed a rise in their standard of living in exchange for serving Hutt business interests. Toydarians have happily maintained a healthy distance from galactic affairs, more or less ignoring the rise of the Empire except as it impacts their mercantile interests.

Most Toydarians make their way within Hutt space, generally serving the interests of the powerful crime lords and helping manage the businesses and bureaucracies that make it all work. Many, however, prefer to employ their natural gifts for business and trade elsewhere, finding the places in the galaxy where they can carve out their niche while wheeling and dealing with anyone who can pay for what they choose to sell.

Homeworld: Toydaria is a world of muck, mud, and swamps, covered in swarms of bugs and massive quantities of algae. Monsoons, plagues of fungal origin, and nasty predators like the huge carnivorous grabworms make the planet generally unpleasant for almost anyone who visits, yet Toydarians have a profound love and pride in their homeworld.

Language: Toydaria is the native tongue of the species, and most also speak Huttese fluently. Though most Toydarians endeavor to speak Basic to do business, they tend to only be literate in their native tongue.

Life on the Fringe: Despite their odd appearance and mannerisms, Toydarians have a gift for engaging people in deals and conversation. That they don't readily present themselves as a physical threat helps ease others, though anyone who knows of their reputation knows to check his pockets after meeting one.

RACIAL ABILITIES



- **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Brawn
- **Strain Threshold:** 12 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 90 XP
- **Special Abilities:** Toydarians are smaller than average and count as silhouette 0.
- **Hoverer:** Toydarians have wings that allow them to hover slightly off of the ground. When hovering, Toydarians do not have to spend additional maneuvers when navigating difficult terrain. Otherwise, their wings allow them no extra capabilities beyond those of a normal, walking character.

EXPLORER SPECIALIZATIONS

Edge of the Empire introduced the Fringer, Scout, and Trader specializations for the Explorer career. **Enter the Unknown** features three new specializations for the Explorer, each taking the career in new directions. Additionally, these new specializations may enhance any career should a player choose to tap into them as noncareer specialization trees.

The first new specialization is the Archaeologist, that combines a scholar's intellectual curiosity with two-fisted daring to discover the lost treasures of the galaxy. Next is the Big-Game Hunter, that has a survivalist's instincts and the training to take down truly powerful creatures. Finally, the Driver knows the ins and outs of all forms of planet-based vehicles and makes the most of that knowledge in any situation.

The Explorer's eight career skills are **Astrogation**, **Cool**, **Knowledge (Lore)**, **Knowledge (Outer Rim)**, **Knowledge (Xenology)**, **Perception**, **Piloting (Space)**, and **Survival**. He automatically gains one rank in four of these skills (of his choosing) without spending experience, and he receives a discount when he spends experience to purchase ranks in any of these skills.

Remember that each specialization has its own list of bonus career skills; this may allow a player to select a skill twice at creation, thus beginning with two ranks in that skill. No character may start the game with more than two ranks in any skill, however, regardless of how many opportunities he may have to select it (such as combining a free rank from a species with the free skill from both the career and the specialization list).

THE ARCHAEOLOGIST

Most Explorers are searching for the new—new opportunities, new planets, new civilizations, new marketplaces, etc. Archaeologists, on the other hand, are firmly entrenched in the old. The galaxy is impossibly old, and nigh-infinite millennia have witnessed the rise and fall of countless civilizations. The Archaeologist endeavors to find these lost cultures and unlock the secrets of their history, art, science, and everything else about them.

Perhaps an archaeology-oriented Explorer joins a group that's journeying to an area for completely different reasons; he trades his skills and knowledge for the chance to investigate rumors of a potentially valuable find once he gets to where they are going.

THE THIRST FOR DISCOVERY

Though Archaeologists have a strong focus on their scholastic pursuits and understanding of history, they tend to have a rough-and-tumble approach to dealing with the inevitable challenges they are likely to face in the field.

An Archaeologist's list of bonus career skills is a clear indication of his particular areas of focus: **Athletics**, **Discipline**, **Knowledge (Education)**, and **Knowledge (Lore)**. If this is the character's starting specialization, he may choose two of these skills and gain one free rank in each without spending additional starting experience.

Most Archaeologists believe very passionately that what they do is noble and important to the people of the galaxy. They tend to be less concerned with who is currently in charge, except for how the prevailing policies of the current government impact their studies and digs. Unfortunately for the current state of the field, the Empire tends to take a very heavy hand in matters of "revisionist history," preferring to alter findings to best fit its agendas. As such, most Archaeologists either work outside of Imperial channels or wish they did.

Player Character Archaeologists can easily be the centerpiece of a new campaign, building a team of other specialists to help in a recently embarked-upon expedition. Otherwise, such a character may be between digs and looking either for an expedition to join or "filler work" until he can make the right kinds of contacts.



Explorer: Archaeologist Talent Tree

Career Skills: Astrogation, Cool, Knowledge (Lore), Knowledge (Outer Rim), Knowledge (Xenology), Perception, Piloting (Space), Survival

Archaeologist Bonus Career Skills: Athletics, Discipline, Knowledge (Education), Knowledge (Lore)

ACTIVE

PASSIVE

WELL ROUNDED (PASSIVE)
Choose any 2 skills. They permanently become career skills.
COST 5

HARD HEADED (ACTIVE)
When staggered or disoriented, perform the Hard Headed action; make a **Daunting (◆◆◆◆) Discipline check** to remove status. Difficulty reduced per rank of Hard Headed.
COST 5

RESEARCHER (PASSIVE)
Remove ■ per rank of Researcher from all Knowledge checks. Researching a subject takes half the time.
COST 5

GRIT (PASSIVE)
Gain +1 strain threshold.
COST 5

DURABLE (PASSIVE)
May reduce any Critical Injury suffered by 10 per rank of Durable to a minimum of 1.
COST 10

TOUGHENED (PASSIVE)
Gain +2 wound threshold.
COST 10

RESOLVE (PASSIVE)
When a character involuntarily suffers strain, he suffers 1 less strain per rank of Resolve, to a minimum of 1.
COST 10

KNOWLEDGE SPECIALIZATION (PASSIVE)
When acquired, choose 1 Knowledge skill. When making that skill check, may spend ⊕ result to gain additional successes equal to ranks in Knowledge Specialization.
COST 10

STUNNING BLOW (ACTIVE)
When making Melee checks, may inflict damage as strain instead of wounds. This does not ignore soak.
COST 15

KNOCKDOWN (ACTIVE)
After hitting with a melee attack, may spend ⊕ to knock the target prone.
COST 15

RESPECTED SCHOLAR (PASSIVE)
May downgrade difficulty of checks to interact with institutes of learning by one level per rank of Respected Scholar.
COST 15

RESEARCHER (PASSIVE)
Remove ■ per rank of Researcher from all Knowledge checks. Researching a subject takes half the time.
COST 15

HARD HEADED (ACTIVE)
When staggered or disoriented, perform the Hard Headed action; make a **Daunting (◆◆◆◆) Discipline check** to remove status. Difficulty reduced per rank of Hard Headed.
COST 20

ENDURING (PASSIVE)
Gain +1 soak value.
COST 20

GRIT (PASSIVE)
Gain +1 strain threshold.
COST 20

KNOWLEDGE SPECIALIZATION (PASSIVE)
When acquired, choose 1 Knowledge skill. When making that skill check, may spend ⊕ result to gain additional successes equal to ranks in Knowledge Specialization.
COST 20

PIN (ACTIVE)
Take Pin action; make an **Opposed Athletics check** to immobilize an engaged opponent until the end of the character's next turn. Spend ⊕ to extend duration one round.
COST 25

DEDICATION (PASSIVE)
Gain +1 to a single characteristic. This cannot bring a characteristic above 6.
COST 25

RESPECTED SCHOLAR (PASSIVE)
May downgrade difficulty of checks to interact with institutes of learning by one level per rank of Respected Scholar.
COST 25

MUSEUM WORTHY (ACTIVE)
Once per session, take Museum Worthy action; make a **Hard (◆◆◆) Knowledge (Education) check** to ascertain information regarding a relic, ruin, or piece of history.
COST 25

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THE BIG-GAME HUNTER

With the skills of a survivalist, the instincts of a bounty hunter, and the courage of a madman, the Big-Game Hunter tends to baffle everyone with his desire to actively track down, confront, and do battle with the most terrifying creatures in the galaxy. He understands and respects the environments he must contend with in order to pursue his quarry, yet he is less interested in where he is going than in what he is going to kill when he gets there.



THE THRILL OF THE HUNT

Though some true pacifists may take great exception to the notion, Big-Game Hunters tend to believe they are performing a service to the people of the galaxy. They generally seek out truly dangerous and deadly creatures to fight and kill, thus making more areas in the galaxy safe for sentient habitation.

With a focus on all aspects of the hunt, the bonus career skills for a Big-Game Hunter are **Knowledge (Xenology)**, **Ranged (Heavy)**, **Stealth**, and **Survival**. If this is the character's starting specialization, he may choose two of these skills and gain one free rank in each without spending starting experience. Big-Game Hunters tend to know how to get where their prey is, how to stay alive once they get there, and all about whatever it is they are there to do battle with.

Of course, there are plenty of hunters who are more than willing to kill pretty much anything that can net them a hefty profit, whether for pelts, horns, organs, or whatever else someone is willing to pay for. There are some hunters who take specific contracts from local governments to thin out a herd of something that is growing too large or to eliminate particularly enraged (and possibly infected) creatures that pose a danger to civilization.

For a Player Character, a Big-Game Hunter may not seem like a good fit at first. However, his general Explorer capabilities combined with his survival skills and his talent for fighting particularly dangerous foes may well make him a linchpin for a group's success. Many Big-Game Hunters will take whatever jobs they can find out in the Rim just for the chance to travel to new places and see what there is to hunt.

Explorer: Big-Game Hunter Talent Tree

Career Skills: Astrogation, Cool, Knowledge (Lore), Knowledge (Outer Rim), Knowledge (Xenology), Perception, Piloting (Space), Survival

Big-Game Hunter Bonus Career Skills: Knowledge (Xenology), Ranged (Heavy), Stealth, Survival

ACTIVE

PASSIVE

FORAGER
Remove up to ■ ■ from skill checks to find food, water, or shelter. Survival checks to forage take half the time.
COST 5

GRIT
Gain +1 strain threshold.
COST 5

STALKER
Add ▢ per rank of Stalker to all Stealth and Coordination checks.
COST 5

OUTDOORSMAN
Remove ■ per rank of Outdoorsman from checks to move through terrain or manage environmental effects. Decrease overland travel times by half.
COST 5

TOUGHENED
Gain +2 wound threshold.
COST 10

OUTDOORSMAN
Remove ■ per rank of Outdoorsman from checks to move through terrain or manage environmental effects. Decrease overland travel times by half.
COST 10

CONFIDENCE
May decrease difficulty of Discipline checks to avoid fear by 1 per rank of Confidence.
COST 10

SWIFT
Do not suffer usual penalties for moving through difficult terrain.
COST 10

STALKER
Add ▢ per rank of Stalker to all Stealth and Coordination checks.
COST 15

NATURAL HUNTER
Once per session, may reroll any 1 Perception or Vigilance check.
COST 15

EXPERT TRACKER
Remove ■ per rank of Expert Tracker from checks to find tracks or track targets. Decrease time to track a target by half.
COST 15

HEIGHTENED AWARENESS
Allies within close range add ▢ to Perception or Vigilance checks. Engaged allies add ▢▢.
COST 15

GRIT
Gain +1 strain threshold.
COST 20

HUNTER'S QUARRY
Take Hunter's Quarry action; make a **Hard (◆◆◆) Survival check** to upgrade the ability of all attacks made against a target at long range until the end of the character's next turn.
COST 20

QUICK STRIKE
Add ▢ per rank of Quick Strike to combat checks against targets that have not acted yet this encounter.
COST 20

EXPERT TRACKER
Remove ■ per rank of Expert Tracker from checks to find tracks or track targets. Decrease time to track a target by half.
COST 20

BRING IT DOWN
Once per attack, spend 1 Destiny Point to add damage to a single hit equal to target's Brawn value.
COST 25

IMPROVED HUNTER'S QUARRY
Suffer 2 strain to perform Hunter's Quarry action as a maneuver.
COST 25

DEDICATION
Gain +1 to a single characteristic. This cannot bring a characteristic above 6.
COST 25

SUPERIOR REFLEXES
Gain +1 melee defense.
COST 25

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THE DRIVER

Pilots are great for traveling from one system to another, but it's the Drivers that move beings around once they hit dirtside. While nearly anyone can manage the basics of a ground vehicle or a speeder, a Driver is priceless when the blaster bolts start flying or the weather turns particularly nasty. It's one thing to know how to go forward and back and how to apply the breaks. It's another thing entirely to know how far one can flip a speeder over to one side without stalling while skirting the wall of a canyon, swerving through rocky outcroppings and avoiding a hail of plasma fire from the swoop gang that's chasing the group.



THE NEED FOR SPEED

Drivers understand the machines they operate, and they are exceptionally skilled with nearly anything that moves from one place on a planet to another, typically demonstrating some higher level of style or finesse.

In addition to the skills that round out an Explorer, Drivers have access to **Cool**, **Gunnery**, **Mechanics**, and **Piloting (Planetary)** as their bonus career skills. If this is the character's starting specialization, he may choose two of these skills and gain one free rank in each without spending starting experience. As always, remember that no starting skill may have higher than two ranks.

Drivers are highly valued almost anywhere they go. Companies, military and security units, governments, and criminal factions all have a regular need for those who can transport personnel and goods over a planet's surface. Additionally, more than a few planets in the Outer Rim have traditions of racing of one style or another, and Drivers are naturals for being able to enter such competitions and walk away with a decent purse. Naturally, this depends on their skill and their ability to avoid being killed by other Drivers.

An Explorer with a Driver specialization is a natural fit for almost any Player Character group. His basic skill set as an Explorer is already helpful, and his talents for moving the group around on a planet automatically make him exceedingly valuable. This is especially true when the inevitable situation arises demanding a quick getaway under a hail of blaster fire.

Explorer: Driver Talent Tree

Career Skills: Astrogation, Cool, Knowledge (Lore), Knowledge (Outer Rim), Knowledge (Xenology), Perception, Piloting (Space), Survival

Driver Bonus Career Skills: Cool, Gunnery, Mechanics, Piloting (Planetary)

ACTIVE

PASSIVE

FULL THROTTLE (ACTIVE) — COST 5
Take a Full Throttle action; make a **Hard (◆◆◆) Piloting check** to increase a vehicle's top speed by 1 for a number of rounds equal to Cunning.

ALL-TERRAIN DRIVER (PASSIVE) — COST 5
Do not suffer usual penalties for driving through difficult terrain when using Piloting (Planetary).

FINE TUNING (PASSIVE) — COST 5
When reducing the amount of system strain a starship or vehicle suffers, reduce 1 additional strain per rank of Fine Tuning.

GEARHEAD (PASSIVE) — COST 5
Remove ■ per rank of Gearhead from Mechanics checks. Halve the credit cost to add mods to attachments.

GRIT (PASSIVE) — COST 10
Gain +1 strain threshold.

SKILLED JOCKEY (PASSIVE) — COST 10
Remove ■ per rank of Skilled Jockey from all Piloting (Planetary) and Piloting (Space) checks the character attempts.

RAPID REACTION (ACTIVE) — COST 10
Suffer a number of strain to add an equal number of ✲ to initiative checks. Strain suffered cannot exceed ranks in Rapid Reaction.

GRIT (PASSIVE) — COST 10
Gain +1 strain threshold.

IMPROVED FULL THROTTLE (ACTIVE) — COST 15
Suffer 1 strain to attempt Full Throttle as a maneuver and decrease its difficulty to **Average (◆◆)**.

TRICKY TARGET (PASSIVE) — COST 15
Count vehicle or starship piloted as having a silhouette 1 lower when being attacked.

FINE TUNING (PASSIVE) — COST 15
When reducing the amount of system strain a starship or vehicle suffers, reduce 1 additional strain per rank of Fine Tuning.

TOUGHENED (PASSIVE) — COST 15
Gain +2 wound threshold.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING (PASSIVE) — COST 20
Increase defense of vehicle or starship being piloted by 1 per rank of Defensive Driving.

SKILLED JOCKEY (PASSIVE) — COST 20
Remove ■ per rank of Skilled Jockey from all Piloting (Planetary) and Piloting (Space) checks the character attempts.

NATURAL DRIVER (ACTIVE) — COST 20
Once per session, may reroll any 1 Piloting (Planetary) or Gunnery check.

GEARHEAD (PASSIVE) — COST 20
Remove ■ per rank of Gearhead from Mechanics checks. Halve the credit cost to add mods to attachments.

SUPREME FULL THROTTLE (PASSIVE) — COST 25
When performing Full Throttle, top speed increases by 2 instead of 1.

FULL STOP (ACTIVE) — COST 25
When piloting a ship or vehicle, take a full-stop maneuver to reduce speed to zero and suffer system strain equal to the speed reduced.

MASTER DRIVER (ACTIVE) — COST 25
Once per round when driving a vehicle, may suffer 2 strain to perform any action as a maneuver.

DEDICATION (PASSIVE) — COST 25
Gain +1 to a single characteristic. This cannot bring a characteristic above 6.

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NEW TALENTS

Below is a description for each of the new talents added in **Enter the Unknown**. Every entry includes the information required for gameplay (see page 128 of the **Edge of the Empire** Core Rulebook).

ALL-TERRAIN DRIVER
Activation: Passive
Ranked: No
Trees: Driver
When piloting a vehicle using the Piloting (Planetary) skill, the character does not suffer the penalties for driving through difficult terrain.

BRING IT DOWN
Activation: Active (Incidental)
Ranked: No
Trees: Big-Game Hunter
The character may spend 1 Destiny Point to add damage to a single hit equal to his target's Brawn value. This ability may only be activated once per attack.

FULL STOP
Activation: Active (Maneuver)
Ranked: No
Trees: Driver
When piloting a ship or vehicle, the character may take the full-stop maneuver to immediately reduce the speed of the vehicle to zero. The ship or vehicle then suffers one point of system strain for every point of speed it had before stopping.

HUNTER'S QUARRY
Activation: Active (Action)
Ranked: No
Trees: Big-Game Hunter
The character may take the Hunter's Quarry action against an opponent within long range, making a **Hard (◆◆◆) Survival check**. If the check succeeds, upgrade the ability of all attacks made against the target by one until the end of the character's next turn.

HUNTER'S QUARRY (IMPROVED)
Activation: Passive
Ranked: No
Trees: Big-Game Hunter
The character can choose to suffer 2 strain to perform the Hunter's Quarry action as a maneuver instead.

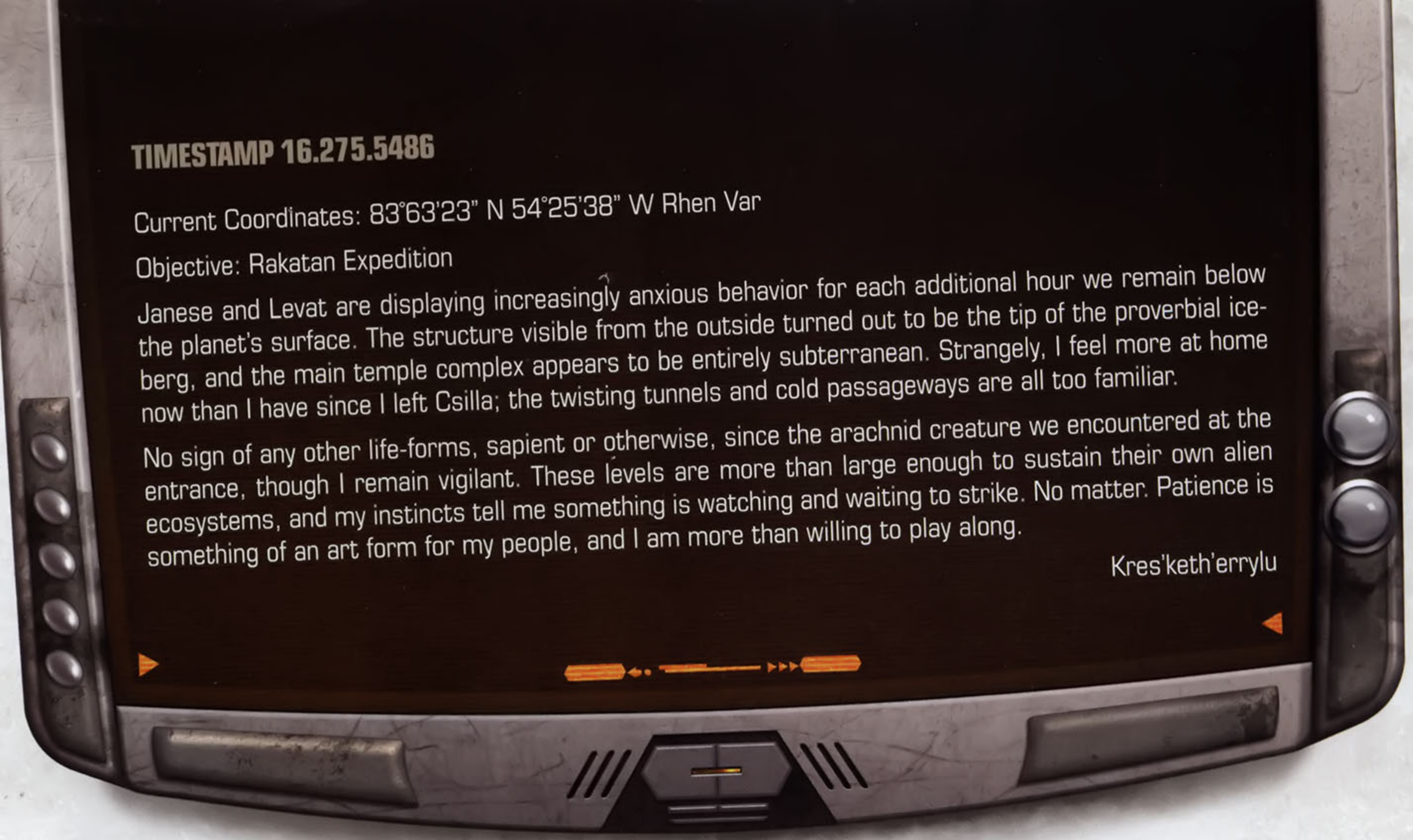
MASTER DRIVER
Activation: Active (Incidental)
Ranked: No
Trees: Driver
Once per round when piloting a vehicle using the Piloting (Planetary) skill, the character may voluntarily suffer 2 strain to perform any action as a maneuver instead.

MUSEUM WORTHY
Activation: Active (Action)
Ranked: No
Trees: Archaeologist
Once per game session, the character may take an action to make a **Hard (◆◆◆) Knowledge (Education) check** regarding a single relic, ruin, or piece of galactic history (subject to the GM's approval). If successful, the character knows an amount of information about the item based on the number of ✡ rolled.

NATURAL DRIVER
Activation: Active (Incidental)
Ranked: No
Trees: Driver
Once per game session, the character may reroll any one Piloting (Planetary) or Gunnery check.

PIN
Activation: Active (Action)
Ranked: No
Trees: Archaeologist
The character may take the Pin action. By successfully passing an **Opposed Athletics check** against an engaged opponent, the character immobilizes that opponent until the end of the character's next turn. In addition, the character may spend ⊕ generated on the check to increase the duration of the immobilization by one round.





EXPLORER MOTIVATIONS

What drives an Explorer? What sends someone from the relative comfort and security of civilization into the vast void of space? What commits him to delving into the hidden places to seek that which has been lost? What moves him to hunt the most dangerous creatures ever encountered? What compels him to grab the stick of a pile of bolts, plastics, and rusted metal and push the machine beyond its breaking point over the most treacherous terrain imaginable?

Explorers often have at the core of their very being an unyielding passion for Discovery; the powerful call to find something out there in the galaxy is their true Motivation. An Explorer may wish to discover the limits of a machine, the capabilities of an infamous beast, the lost secrets of an ancient civilization, the mercantile potential of a hidden society, the resources of a newly discovered planet, or the uncounted opportunities among the limitless stars.

Often, what happens after making a Discovery is far less important than the journey to make it in the first place. Explorers regularly turn the task of exploiting and managing their Discoveries over to others (though usually at a tidy profit to themselves). Staying put is anathema to the Explorer; there are always new Discoveries out there waiting for him.

The following chart (**Table 1–2: Random Explorer Motivations**) can be used during character creation or advancement to replace the one in the Core Rulebook, incorporating the new Discovery Motivation:

TABLE 1–2: RANDOM EXPLORER MOTIVATIONS

d10 roll	Motivation Results
1-2	Ambition
3-4	Cause
5-6	Relationship
7-9	Discovery
10	Roll once on each of any two categories

The chart on the next page, **Table 1–3: Specific Discoveries**, gives the specific results for the Discovery Motivation. If a player selects Discovery or rolls the Discovery category at random, he may then roll a random specific Discovery-driven result or choose the one that best suits the Explorer character concept he had in mind.

TABLE 1-3: SPECIFIC DISCOVERIES

d100	Result
01-10	**Self:** The Explorer may be pursuing any number of goals or simply wandering the galaxy until something catches his interest. His main purpose, however, is to discover who he truly is and what he is meant to do with his life. Each new path offers him a chance to learn something new about himself, and each challenge he faces gives him insight into what he is really capable of. For many Explorers, this is a journey that will only end with their deaths...and possibly not even then.
11-20	**Civilizations:** As vast as the galaxy is, there are untold cultures and societies that remain utterly unknown to the greater population. Many of these civilizations lived and died in total obscurity, while many others remain vital and ready to be encountered by someone dedicated and enterprising enough to search them out. The Archaeologist career is especially suited for searching out and understanding the former, while the Trader will often find great joy in discovering the latter.
21-30	**Planets:** As vast as planets are, the Empire is exponentially larger. Stars can go for long stretches of time being listed on astrogation charts without anyone knowing what planets may orbit them and what those planets may have in the way of resources and utility as livable places. Finding a planet of worth can make an Explorer's mark in the galaxy, as well as his fortune if he sells the information to the right buyer. Scouts, in particular, are specialists in such Discoveries.
31-40	**Treasures:** Some hunt it for the glory. Some hunt it for the challenge. Most treasure hunters do so, however, for the opportunity to fill their accounts with more credits than they can imagine spending in one lifetime. Whether it's a cache of precious gems stashed away long ago by decades-dead pirates or the incalculable worth of art and crafts from an eons-dead civilization, treasure hunters know there are immense riches out there in the galaxy just waiting for them to find where X marks the spot.
41-50	**Secrets:** For some, secrets are another kind of treasure, albeit one that provides access to power as well as wealth. Some seek out secrets at the behest of others, preferring to stay out of the direct conflicts caused by the possession of them, while others happily wield the secrets they've uncovered as weapons for their own pursuits. As powerful and wealth inducing as secrets can be, however, they can also be incredibly dangerous; many beings will kill to maintain important secrets, and many others will kill to obtain them from those who discover them in the first place.
51-60	**Knowledge:** Akin to secrets, but not always quite as dangerous, lost and hidden knowledge can be a powerful asset. Eons of conflict caused vast storehouses of knowledge to be lost amid the rubble of destroyed cities, derelict ships, and abandoned space stations. Intrepid Explorers are the miners of that knowledge, bringing it back into the light of day for all to benefit from. Archaeologists are naturally inclined to search for knowledge, as are Fringers and Traders.
61-70	**Resources:** Credits are credits, but resources drive the economies of every system, as well as the Empire itself. Raw materials power the Imperial war machine, which is ever expanding. So, too, does the burgeoning Rebellion crave important resources as it struggles to build up some semblance of an organized resistance. Of course, there are also the millions of businesses, factions, and entrepreneurs who seek one source or another of some special kind of resource in order to enhance their trade position and power. Those who can uncover such sources—Scouts are particularly sought after for such work—can make very good money.
71-80	**Technology:** Billions of scientists, engineers, and inventors throughout the galaxy have been creating wonders of technology for thousands of years. Much of it has been lost due to war or merely the fall of a civilization. Other scientific marvels manifest on a daily basis, unknown to the galaxy at large. Clever Explorers seek out these technological Discoveries to bring to the general population, though usually through either corporate or Imperial channels. Fringers and Traders are most likely to have such a focus, though Drivers will obviously be interested in any vehicular technology they can uncover.
81-90	**The Lost:** Explorers know their way around the galaxy better than anyone. They know where the hidden places are, as well as the pathways and interstellar routes that go unknown to all others. As such, Explorers are often called upon (either by others or by their own code) to seek out those who have become lost. Some seek to be lost, while many find they would no longer know the way home even if they wished to return. Many are unable to escape their current circumstances, needing to be found and liberated. Anyone with this specific Discovery result might wish to roll on the Relationship Motivation chart as well, determining who he is specifically seeking.
91-00	**"Anywhere but here!":** Instead of pursuing any one specific Discovery, the Explorer is driven by the thrill of exploration in and of itself. He is never content with the accomplishments of his previous expeditions, and as soon as he has finished one such trek, he is already planning the next, sometimes even before he has found his present quarry.

EXPLORER SIGNATURE ABILITIES

In addition to the specializations that a character can choose from within a given career, he also has access to that career's signature abilities. These abilities are special, elite talents only experienced characters of the specified career may access. They are feats of strength only possible through the character's skill and ability gained over a long and successful career, separating the journeyman from the master.

SIGNATURE ABILITY BREAKDOWN

A signature ability is composed of three elements: the nodes linking it to a talent tree, the ability's basic form, and a series of upgrades that augment the ability.

NODES

Each signature ability has four nodes lined up across its top. These four nodes match up with the four talents on the bottom row of a talent tree. Each node can either be active, showing a bracket facing upward, or inactive, remaining blank. To be able to attach a signature ability to a tree, the character must own all of the talents along the bottom row of the destination talent tree that match up with the active nodes on the signature ability.

ABILITY BASIC FORM

When a character acquires a signature ability, he must first purchase the basic form of the ability. This takes up the entire first row of the signature ability tree and is purchased with experience points. The experience cost of each upgrade is listed in its box.

UPGRADES

After the character has purchased the basic form of the signature ability, he can further customize the ability by purchasing upgrades. Upgrades, much like talents, are purchased with experience points, and each upgrade may only be purchased if it connects to the basic form of the ability or a previously purchased upgrade. The experience cost of each upgrade is listed in its box.



ACQUIRING SIGNATURE ABILITIES

Before a character can purchase a signature ability or any of its upgrades, the character must "attach" that ability to the bottom of one of his current in-career talent trees. Once a signature ability has been attached to a tree, no other signature abilities may be attached to that tree, and the attached ability cannot be removed or switched to a different tree. A character can only acquire a signature ability from his career and can only attach that ability to in-career talent trees.

To attach a signature ability to one of his talent trees, the character must own all of the talents along the bottom row of the destination talent tree that match up with the active nodes on the signature ability. Then, once a signature ability has been attached to a talent tree, the character may purchase the ability's basic form and its upgrades using experience, just as if they were talents.

The Explorer career has access to two signature abilities: Sudden Discovery and Unmatched Mobility.

Explorer Signature Ability Tree: Sudden Discovery



SUDDEN DISCOVERY BASE ABILITY

Once per game session, the character may spend 2 Destiny Points to make a **Hard (◆◆◆) Knowledge (Outer Rim) or Knowledge (Core Worlds) check**. If he succeeds, the character can pinpoint his exact location without a map or other guide, discover a lost or hidden item or location, or identify a safe and fast path through any terrain. The exact nature of what the character is trying to accomplish, as well as the end results, must be approved by the GM.

COST 30

ADD BOOST

Add ■ to skill check to activate Sudden Discovery.

COST 10

ADD BOOST

Add ■ to skill check to activate Sudden Discovery.

COST 15

REDUCE SETBACK

Remove ■ from skill check to activate Sudden Discovery.

COST 10

REDUCE DIFFICULTY

Reduce the difficulty of the skill check to activate Sudden Discovery to **Average (◆◆)**.

COST 15

REDUCE SETBACK

Remove ■ from skill check to activate Sudden Discovery.

COST 10

FREQUENCY

Sudden Discovery may be used twice per game session.

COST 15

CHANGE SKILL

Sudden Discovery can be activated with the Astrogation or Survival skills.

COST 10

DESTINY

Sudden Discovery costs 1 Destiny Point instead of 2.

COST 15

SIGNATURE ABILITY: SUDDEN DISCOVERY

Plying the endless worlds of the galaxy leads Explorers to master many different skills, not the least of which is the uncanny ability to keep their bearing no matter where they find themselves. A veteran spacer may be able to ascertain his position in the galaxy by simply staring out of the cockpit, while an experienced scout may be able to find his way out of a completely unknown alien wilderness solely through instinct and past experience.

BASE ABILITY

Once per game session, the character may spend 2 Destiny Points to make a **Hard (◆◆◆) Knowledge (Outer Rim)** or **Knowledge (Core Worlds) check**. If he succeeds, the character can pinpoint his exact location without a map or other guide, discover a lost or hidden item or location, or identify a safe and fast path through any terrain. The exact nature of what the character is trying to accomplish, as well as the end results, must be approved by the GM (see **Narrative Abilities**).

When making the skill check to activate Sudden Discovery, the GM can add ■ or ■ for any situational effects that might cause the test to be more easy or difficult.

UPGRADES

Sudden Discovery has several upgrades that can improve its effects and make it easier to use. Any upgrades that appear in Sudden Discovery's tree multiple times have their effects stack.

Add Boost Upgrade: When making the skill check to activate Sudden Discovery, the character adds ■.

Change Skill Upgrade: To activate Sudden Discovery, the character can choose to use the Astrogation skill to find locations in space or the Survival skill to find locations on the ground (instead of the normal Knowledge skills).

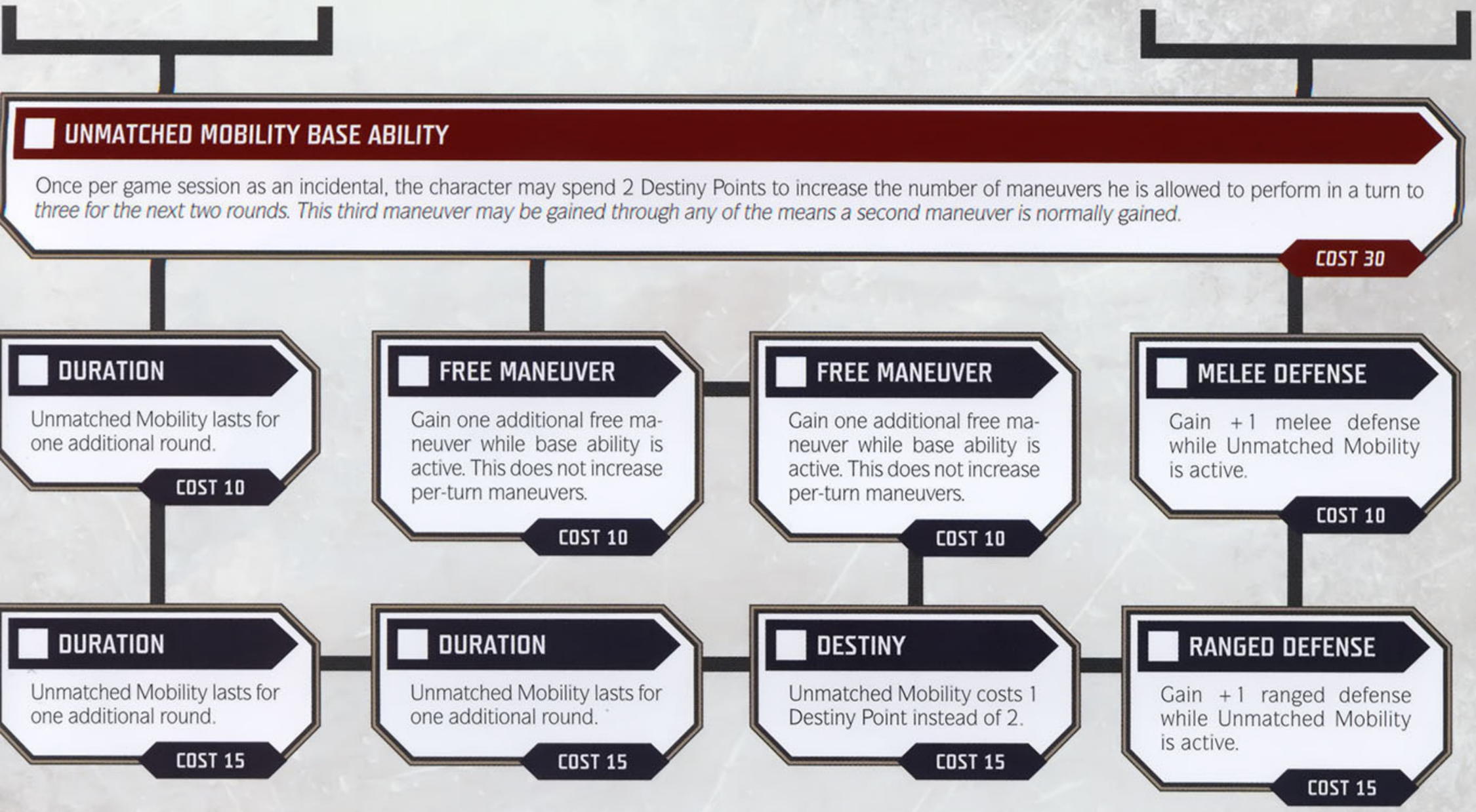
Destiny Upgrade: To activate Sudden Discovery, the character only needs to spend 1 Destiny Point instead of the normal 2.

Frequency Upgrade: Sudden Discovery can be used twice per game session instead of once.

Reduce Difficulty Upgrade: The skill check difficulty to activate Sudden Discovery is **Average (◆◆)** instead of **Hard (◆◆◆)**.

Reduce Setback Upgrade:
When making the skill check to activate Sudden Discovery, the character removes ■.

Explorer Signature Ability Tree: Unmatched Mobility



SIGNATURE ABILITY: UNMATCHED MOBILITY

Agile and talented, Explorer characters often survive and thrive among the dangers of the galaxy through the use of speed and mobility. A seasoned Explorer can focus under pressure, using adrenaline and training to move around and complete tasks faster than those around him. Some use this ability to evade danger, keeping themselves out of harm's way. Others use it to gain an edge against their foes, outmaneuvering them in battle.

NARRATIVE ABILITIES

Many signature abilities (such as the Explorer's Sudden Discovery) have primarily narrative effects, allowing the character to instantly overcome a challenge in his path. These abilities are powerful tools that allow the players and GM to work together to tell a more collaborative, cinematic story. However, they can also pose a challenge to the GM as the character circumvents sections of his planned narrative.

Because of these potential challenges, when a player wishes to use a signature ability with a narrative effect, he must first consult with the GM. Together, the player and GM decide on the effect the ability will have, fitting it into the narrative of the game. However, as with all things, the GM is the final arbiter as to the effect of the ability.

BASE ABILITY

Once per game session as an incidental, the character may spend two Destiny Points to increase the number of maneuvers he is allowed to perform in a turn to three for the next 2 rounds. This third maneuver may be gained through any of the means a second maneuver is gained (see page 200 of the Core Rulebook).

UPGRADES

Unmatched Mobility has several upgrades that can improve its effects and make it easier to use. Any upgrades that appear in Unmatched Mobility's tree multiple times have their effects stack.

Destiny Upgrade: To activate Unmatched Mobility, the character only needs to spend 1 Destiny Point instead of the normal 2.

Duration Upgrade: Unmatched Mobility lasts for one additional round.

Free Maneuver Upgrade: While Unmatched Mobility is active, the character gains one additional free maneuver on his turn. This does not increase the maximum number of maneuvers the character can perform per turn (three with base ability active).

Melee Defense Upgrade: While Unmatched Mobility is active, the character increases his melee defense value by 1.

Ranged Defense Upgrade: While Unmatched Mobility is active, the character increases his ranged defense value by 1.



4

OUTFITTED FOR ADVENTURE

"Of course I wear a blaster, same as I wear pants; it's expected in polite company."

–Brynn Ryeule, Merchant Trader

For every job, there is a correct and proper tool, and some jobs require more tools than others. The professional adventurers and risk-takers who make up the specializations of the Explorer career require more specific gear and tools than most other careers. This isn't limited to weapons, although there is no shortage of guns large and small marketed to Explorers. It also includes various pieces of gear designed to keep them safe, keep them working, and keep them healthy.

The following chapter contains an expanded list of ships, vehicles, droids, tools, and assorted gear tailored to the specializations of the Explorer career. For the Driver and Trader, there are speedy and powerful new swoops and lumbering new freighters with cavernous holds. For the Fringer and Big-Game Hunter, there are deadly-accurate hunting weapons and survival gear to help them endure the worst environments in the galaxy. For Scouts and Archaeologists, there are suits of armor, sensors and tools, and storage solutions to help carry artifacts and loot. There are also a handful of new droids with unique programming and functions designed to support and augment the skills and abilities of any of the Explorer specializations.

THE ARMS LOCKER

One of the oldest maxims in the galaxy states that an armed society is a polite society, and indeed, very few inhabitants of the Outer Rim are squeamish about carrying weapons. Weapons are worn openly and proudly in most places, from fancy-dress parties to space stations to the boardrooms of those few corporations based on the fringes. A sidearm tied down to a spacer's hip or the suggestion of violence in a nonde-

TABLE 2-1: RANGED WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Dam	Crit	Range	Encum	HP	Price	Rarity	Special
Energy Weapons									
X-30 Lancer	Ranged (Light)	5	4	Long	1	3	1,000	5	Accurate 1, Pierce 2
E-11s	Ranged (Heavy)	10	3	Extreme	6	3	3,500 (R)	7	Accurate 1, Cumbersome 3, Pierce 2, Slow Firing 1
LBR-9	Ranged (Heavy)	10	-	Long	6	4	2,800	4	Disorient 2, Stun Damage
Slugthrowers									
Model 77	Ranged (Heavy)	6	-	Long	3	3	1,100	6	Pierce 4, Stun Damage
Model 38	Ranged (Heavy)	8	3	Extreme	5	4	3,000	6	Accurate 2, Pierce 3
Hammer	Ranged (Heavy)	8	4	Short	5	4	1,500	5	Blast 6, Knockdown
Explosives and Other Weapons									
Net Gun	Ranged (Heavy)	3	-	Short	4	2	750	5	Ensnare 5
Glop Grenade	Ranged (Light)	-	-	Short	1	0	100	6	Blast -, Ensnare 3

script rifle case carried by a professional hunter are as much a statement about that individual as the clothes he wears or the people with whom he associates.

Very few weapons are restricted among the worlds in the Outer Rim, although some are looked at askance by law enforcement. Czerka Arms claims that for every person in every profession there is an appropriate blaster, slugthrower, or melee weapon. While this is largely simple marketing, it also carries a grain of truth in the tumultuous and often violent Rim territories. Presented in this section are a number of new weapons geared toward hunting and exploration as opposed to pure combat. Highly accurate, slow-firing sniper rifles, long-range sporting blaster pistols, dart rifles, custom slugthrowers, and even industrial tools that can serve as improvised weapons are included here, each one yet another addition to the professional explorer's ever-expanding tool kit.

ENERGY WEAPONS

Blasters and other energy weapons have been the mainstay in galactic society for thousands of years due to their reliability and effectiveness.

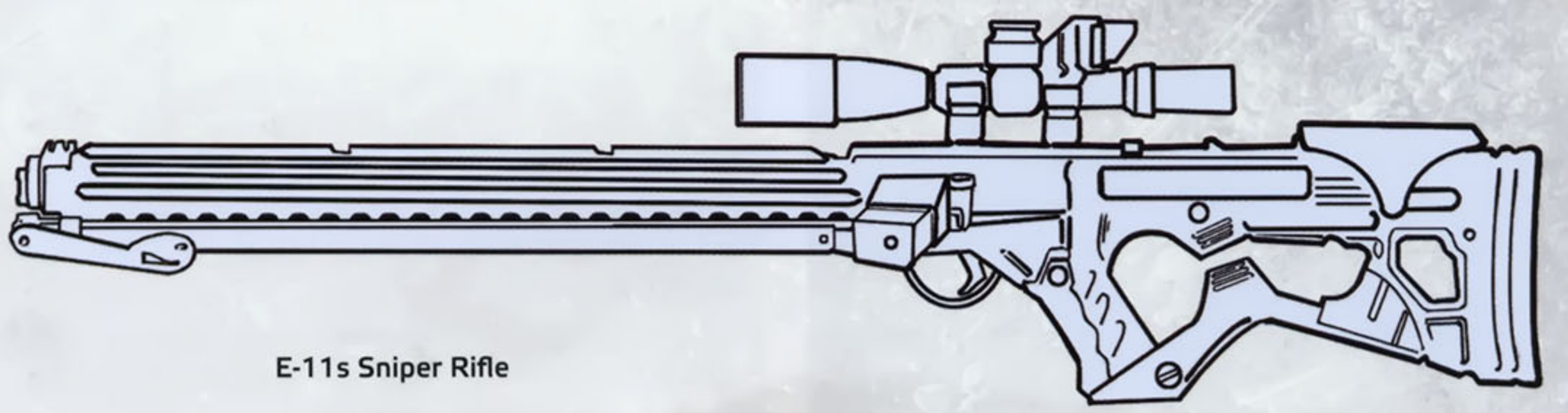
SOROSUUB X-30 LANCER PRECISION BLAST PISTOL

Lightweight and easy to use, SoroSuub's X-30 Lancer is one of the most popular sporting blasters on the market. Designed with competition shooters and pistol hunters in mind, the Lancer is optimized for range, accuracy, and stopping power. Built to SoroSuub's exacting standards, the Lancer is a sleek, modern-looking blaster pistol with a long barrel and a weighted, finely balanced stock. Firing a blaster bolt that is well out of scale for a weapon its size, it uses a custom-formulated, highly volatile mix of blaster gasses and a supercharged actuating module to fire intense, highly concentrated bolts accurately over long distances. Superior galven patterns in the barrel reduce beam degradation and dispersal, allowing the pistol to maintain effectiveness well past the range of other weapons of its class.

In the Outer Rim, Lancer pistols are relatively common, especially among those who need a powerful weapon in a lightweight package. Many speeders and atmospheric craft have one of these fine pistols tucked away in an easy-to-reach storage locker, and many starships include them in their escape pods and emergency kits as a defensive weapon. They are also especially popular among explorers and scholars for their easy handling characteristics, as well as by those big-game hunters who enjoy the challenge of pistol hunting.

BLASTECH E-11S SNIPER RIFLE

Developed from the venerable E-11 blaster rifle, BlasTech's E-11s was designed primarily as a dedicated marksman's rifle for use by the Galactic Empire. A large, sleek, and deadly-looking weapon, the E-11s is nearly as long as a grown human is tall, with a shrouded barrel that makes up fully half of its length. Excel-



E-11s Sniper Rifle

lent balance and precision-fit components help compensate for this, however, and the E-11s is quite easy to carry and shoot for a weapon of its size. The E-11s is incredibly popular among the Empire's scout and reconnaissance forces, whose missions typically see them operating in conditions where the long range and pinpoint accuracy of a dedicated sniper weapon can be used to their fullest potential. In the field, the E-11s grants a small reconnaissance squad incredible reach and allows them to project their force at ranges unmatched by most military units. Officially, the E-11s carries a restricted rating, limiting it to governmental, military, and law-enforcement use only. That being said, more than a few of these powerful rifles have fallen out of the backs of speeder trucks, so to speak. Those that have found their way into civilian hands make for excellent hunting and sniping weapons, and their performance nearly makes up for the serious risks involved in owning them.

E-11s rifles are equipped with relatively lightweight, matte-finish composite furniture that absorbs light, a fixed stock, and a powerful multioptical telescopic sight. The rifle's firing mechanism uses a supercharged actuating module, upgraded xciter, and extremely volatile, highly compressed blaster gasses to increase the range and penetration of the blaster bolt. This extra power has the added side effect of reducing refraction and beam degradation, allowing it to maintain both its penetration and stopping power at incredible range. While this makes for a powerful weapon, especially in the hands of a talented marksman, it also makes for a weapon that consumes quite a bit of energy and as such has a limited ammunition capacity (a rarity in blasters). These rifles also emit an enormous amount of heat when firing, thanks to their supercharged firing systems. To compensate for this, the E-11s has a slow rate of fire to allow for cooldown, and the barrel is insulated with a triple-redundant nitrogen cooling system.

BLASTECH LBR-9 STUN RIFLE

Stun rifles are rare weapons in the galaxy, perceived by most to be of limited utility. Possessing low-intensity blast-actuating modulators and using a lower yield mix of blast gasses than other, more lethal blaster rifles, stun rifles are capable of only nonlethal stunning blasts. Most of these weapons are used in law enforcement, corrections, and occasionally in bounty hunting, fields in which the need to keep targets alive is often of paramount importance. They are typically short ranged, and their bolts have a broad spread to catch as many targets in their blast as possible. While this is effective in close quarters or in large crowds, in open terrain their effectiveness is sadly reduced. To counter this, and to corner the market in long-range stun blasters, BlasTech recently released the all-new LBR-9 Stun Rifle.

Based on the current model DL-87 Firespray stun rifle, the LBR-9 is a long-barreled, light-framed blaster rifle fitted with composite furniture and simple iron sights. Using the majority of the Firespray's firing system with an upgraded galven pattern designed to fit the longer barrel, the LBR-9 can fire a concentrated, high-penetration stun bolt with a range and accuracy commensurate with other, more lethal weapons in its class. With its optimized and upgraded galven pattern and a patented mix of blaster gasses, the LBR-9 packs quite a punch and typically needs only one or two shots to knock a target out of commission. Only recently brought to market and largely sold to Core Systems' planetary law-enforcement agencies, few of these specialized weapons have found their way to the fringes of civilized space. Those that do are quickly snatched up by both beast and bounty hunters for their precise handling characteristics and nonlethal nature, and they are gaining a reputation as finely made, accurate, and dependable weapons.

SLUGTHROWERS

Slugthrowers are generally thought of as archaic weapons. Though not as powerful or as accurate as a blaster, their rugged durability (plus not requiring a power source to fire) makes them popular on some outlying worlds and amongst eccentric collectors.

FIELD SPORTS MODEL 77 AIR RIFLE

Air rifles are not considered weapons on most planets in the galaxy, and the majority of sentients therein see

FIELD SPORTS "SMARTTRANQ"

Developed in cooperation with CorChemCo, SmartTranq is an adaptable synthetic tranquilizer designed to be used with the Model 77 Air Rifle. When the tranquilizer enters the bloodstream of a target, it immediately begins to mutate, changing constantly and reconfiguring itself to find the quickest, most efficient way to overwhelm the target's defensive systems and render it unconscious.

Upon a successful hit with the Model 77, the target must immediately make an **Average (◆ ◆) Resilience check**. If the target fails, it suffers 5 strain, plus 2 additional strain per ⚙ generated on the check. If the check generates ⚙, the GM can spend it to make the target check against the tranquilizer again during the next round. If the GM does so, increase the difficulty of the check by one.

Equipping the Model 77 with SmartTranq costs 500 credits. This does not change the weapon's profile—it simply adds the above special rule to the weapon. If the weapon ever runs out of ammo, the user must purchase a reload (also costing 500 credits) before using the SmartTranq again.

them as little more than toys. Even those Core Worlds with the most draconian restrictions on weapon ownership have no official laws governing air-powered weapons. A specialized form of slugthrower, air rifles use compressed air or other gasses to propel tiny metal pellets or light, spin-stabilized darts over long distances. Lightweight and extremely accurate, they are usually marketed to hobby shooters, collectors, or those who need a quiet, easy-to-use, and relatively safe weapon with which to practice their marksmanship.

These weapons' balance, accuracy, portability, and the nearly complete silence of their firing mechanism make them excellent weapons for hunters, both of beasts and of sentient beings. Combined with the ability to chamber specialty darts that can be filled with various chemicals and toxins, air weapons make for fine silent killing weapons.

One of the most common air rifles on the market is the Model 77 from Field Sports, a trusted name in air-weapon production. Known colloquially as the Sandman, thanks to the unique effects of its standard ammunition, the Model 77 is a lightweight, long-barreled air gun similar in silhouette and stature to a sporting blaster. Made primarily of polycarbonate with fibermesh reinforcement, the Model 77 was initially marketed as a nonlethal weapon for animal control and law enforcement. It fires tiny, spin-stabilized darts with laser-honed tips capable of piercing the thickest hide from a detachable clip that is quick and easy to reload. Each dart contains a dose of tranquilizer agent that induces unconsciousness. In addition, the Model 77's darts can be loaded with the heavy-duty "SmartTranq" tranquilizer with an active ingredient that adapts itself upon contact with the target's bloodstream to be as effective as possible no matter what the species. Sandman air rifles have a well-deserved reputation for accuracy and reliability. In the Outer Rim many are used by bounty hunters and big-game hunters who need to take prey alive in order to collect their payments.

CZERKA ARMS MODEL 38 SHARPSHOOTER'S RIFLE

For millennia, Czerka Arms has maintained a reputation as a purveyor of fine arms and ar-



CZERKA DETONATOR ROUND

While the standard penetrator ammunition offered with the Model 38 works well in most situations, sometimes a shooter needs a little extra punch to fell his prey. To this end, Czerka offers the Detonator Round for use with the Model 38. Instead of the coated penetrator bullet, Detonator Rounds have a metal coated shaped charge bullet that explodes on contact with its target. When used with the Model 38, these rounds have the following effect on the weapon's stats: Remove the Pierce quality and add the Blast (5) quality and Knockdown quality. Detonator Rounds cost 450 credits for a box of rounds, and have a rarity of 7. If the weapon ever runs out of ammo, a new box of rounds must be purchased to reload it.

mor for both the military and civilian markets. While they have an impressive and diversified catalog of offensive and defensive products ranging from sporting blasters and vibroblades to flame cannons and combat droids, they are perhaps best known for producing a successful line of fine slugthrowing pistols and rifles.

A throwback to a more primitive age, slugthrowers are considered anachronistic and unwieldy by most sentients. However, Czerka's line of slugthrowers, which they refer to as "Legacy Arms," has proven modestly successful, especially among the beings of the Outer Rim. Some of their Legacy Arms clients are collectors or historians, others are farmers or colonists who appreciate the affordability and ruggedness of these firearms, and some simply prefer the visceral noise and flash of a chemical-propelled slug over the cool precision of a blaster. Whatever their reasons, whether preference or necessity, Czerka is the popular choice for slugthrowers.

One of Czerka's more popular Legacy Arms is the Model 38 Sharpshooter's Rifle. Marketed to hunters, and tacitly to snipers and assassins, the Model 38 is an extremely powerful, accurate, long-range rifle with incredible destructive potential. A long and finely crafted weapon, each Model 38 is custom built to the customer's specifications. It chambers a powerful, large-caliber round with a specially coated penetrating bullet that can pierce even the toughest hides. The rifle is operated by means of a simple and rugged bolt action and fed by a five-round detachable clip. Their stocks and other furniture are typically either lightweight composites or polished, exotic hardwoods, depending on the customer's tastes.

New rifles must be ordered in person from a certified Czerka Arms dealer, at which time the customer is measured for fit and his shooting style is analyzed in an on-site simulator. This allows the Czerka Arms rep to determine the best possible configuration for the rifle in relation to its new owner and to offer advice on further customization.

Once the rifle is completed and delivered, it is as closely matched to the new shooter's stance, stature, and habits as art and artifice can make it. This makes the rifles incredibly accurate at any range, as the custom fit and frame makes the Model 38 point and shoot as if it were an extension of the shooter's body. Most Model 38 rifles in the Outer Rim are owned by hunters and marksmen for hire who ordered them directly from Czerka. There are some of these highly prized rifles on the used market, although they typically need serious modification before a new owner can use them to their full potential. If purchased used, a Czerka Model 38 loses the Accurate 2 quality until the rifle can be modified to fit the new shooter (requiring a **Hard (◆◆◆) Mechanics check**).

CZERKA ARMS KS-23 HAMMER

The KS-23 is yet another popular slugthrowing design by Czerka Arms. A rarity even among the already scarce slugthrowing class of weapons, the KS-23 fires a canister of small explosive pellets instead of a single long-range, precision slug. When fired, these pellets scatter from the barrel to fill a wide area with as much destructive potential as possible. Brutally effective at short and medium ranges, this weapon is known unofficially as the "Hammer."

The KS-23 was initially produced as a hunting weapon to take down extremely hardy beasts like the krayt dragon or rancor. They are roughly the size of a blaster carbine, with a large-caliber smoothbore barrel, a sturdy action, and composite stocks and furniture. The ammunition is stored in a tubular, five-round magazine that runs under the barrel, and the firing mechanism is self-loading and uses the weapon's recoil for power. An extremely unsubtle weapon, the KS-23 is loud and has a powerful recoil thanks to the large-bore, high-powered ammunition it fires.

Thanks to its rugged construction and powerful ammunition, the KS-23 has gained a wide following in the Outer Rim. Easy to maintain and repair and built from high-quality, resilient materials, the Hammer stands up exceedingly well to the kinds of abuse equipment suffers in the wild places of the galaxy. Used primarily by big-game hunters, these weapons have also found their way into the armories of explorers, smugglers, pirates, and even some planetary law-enforcement agencies who appreciate their power and utility.

EXPLOSIVES AND OTHER WEAPONS

Many explorers don't have much use for high explosives and flame projectors. However, they do wield some esoteric weaponry that fits their particular needs.

PALANDRIX AO14 "ARANEA" NET GUN

The Palandrix Personal Protection Gear company has been a leading provider of personal armor, defensive weapons, and crowd-control devices to the Core Worlds for generations. Known primarily for its broad range of nonlethal weapons such as stun batons, sonic stunners, and stun gauntlets, the company also produce a small line of offensive weapons, including the handsome and deadly PowerCane. Among its various product lines are a few devices that don't fall neatly into any one category, possessing both defensive and offensive attributes that make them extremely versatile and effective. One such item is the AO14 "Aranea" Net Gun.

Heavy and squat, the Aranea is roughly the size of a small blaster carbine with a wide-gauge, rifled barrel, and lightweight polycarbonate furniture. Officially classified as a grenade launcher, the AO14 is a single-shot, break-action, breach-loading weapon that fires entangling munitions as opposed to slugs or blaster bolts. The 40mm spin-stabilized ammunition used by the Aranea contains a tightly packed, weighted, fine-mesh net constructed from synthetic ArachSilk made by CorChemCo. Upon firing, the shells fired by this weapon burst open at a preset range and release the net, the spin of the round causing the net to unfurl and the weights spreading it to its maximum width. With its incredibly strong tensile strength and the ability to tighten around an opponent as he struggles, the Aranea's nets make excellent tools for capturing animal and sentient targets alive.

MERR-SONN MUNITIONS G-20 GLOP GRENADE

Merr-Sonn's ingenious G-20 Glop Grenade is a reusable, less-than-lethal antipersonnel grenade used to suppress rioters and capture fugitives alive. Roughly the size of a thermal detonator, the G-20 is a small metallic sphere covered in spray nozzles. As a trigger, glop grenades are equipped with a timer that can be set to detonate on contact or set to detonate after a delay of up to fifteen seconds. Inside the sphere is a refillable reservoir that holds a semiliquid foam that instantly hardens upon contact with oxygen. When deployed, the user sets his detonation time and simply throws it at his target. When it detonates, the grenade sprays its quick-hardening foam over a broad area, trapping everything in its range in a thick, nearly unbreakable substance that is almost as strong as ferrocrete. The hardened foam is only good for around five minutes, after which it begins to break down and becomes brittle and easy to shatter.

A glop grenade's Ensnare quality triggers automatically on any targets the weapon hits, with no need to spend .

While glop grenades are ostensibly rated as nonlethal, accidents do happen, and they have been known to cause death due to suffocation or, in extremely rare cases, allergic reactions to the foam. Whenever a target is hit with a glop grenade, he must make an **Easy (◆) Coordination check** to keep the foam from filling his breathing passages. Failure on the skill check indicates that the foam has cut off the target's air, and he immediately suffers the effects of suffocation as detailed on page 214 of the **Edge of the Empire** Core Rulebook.

Glop grenades that are recovered after use can be refilled with special pressurized hypoinjectors that transfer the foam from a sealed container into the grenade's reservoir without exposing it to the atmosphere. This requires an **Easy (◆) Ranged (Light) check** to complete. Failure on the check indicates that the foam has been ruined, and any net gained on a failed skill check means that some mishap with the filling system occurs and the user is engulfed in quickly hardening goo. This doesn't require an attack roll, but it does require the user to make an **Easy (◆) Coordination check** to avoid getting the goo in his nose or mouth per the rules above. Purchase of a Glop Grenade includes the hypoinjector and five refill canisters. Additional refill canisters can be purchased for 100 credits apiece and have a rarity of 6.

MELEE WEAPONS

While many Explorers prefer to protect themselves with blasters, there are some melee weapons designed for those delving into the wilderness, and some tools can be repurposed in a tight situation.

KARFLO CORPORATION G9-GP PULSE DRILL

Makers of the venerable G2-GE beamdrill, Karflo Corporation is a Corporate Sector-based conglomerate with interests in industrial mining, droid production, and planetary exploration. Their G-series beamdrills are used throughout the galaxy in industries as widely varied as computer production and deep-space asteroid mining. They use variable-strength continuous-beam plasma projectors to burn through earth, stone, metals, and nearly any organic or inorganic substance in their path. They can perform any kind of cutting or burning task, from gently melting lightweight polymers to vaporizing waste materials and industrial byproducts. Recently, Karflo Corporation has been exploring smaller, more portable versions of their powerful

TABLE 2-2: MELEE WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Dam	Crit	Range	Encum	HP	Price	Rarity	Special
G9-GP Pulse Drill	Melee	5	4	Engaged	5	2	1,100	4	Breach 1, Cumbersome 3, Inaccurate 2
Huntsman Vibrospear	Melee	+3	3	Engaged	4	2	950	6	Pierce 2, Vicious 2
Mk. VIII Vibrosaw	Melee	+4	2	Engaged	6	3	1,500	5	Cumbersome 5, Pierce 2, Sunder, Vicious 2

beamdrills for use by planetary explorers and archaeologists. Their first attempt at this market is the G9-GP Pulse Drill.

The G9-GP is a handheld, low-powered, precision beamdrill designed for work in excavation and light duty mining. They appear as long, bulky rods with a tank at one end and a variable-angle plasma cutter at the other. The beam emitted by the G9-GP is a rapidly pulsing plasma beam around a millimeter thick with an adjustable range that allows it to cut through relatively thick material. While they are primarily tools, their plasma beams make excellent improvised weapons in an emergency, and more than a few explorers have had their lives or limbs saved from a surprise attack by quick application of the pulse drill.

LASERHONE HUNTSMAN VIBROSPEAR

The Huntsman by LaserHone, a maker of fine vibroweapons based in the Corporate Sector, is a relative oddity among weapons of its class. Over two meters long, the Huntsman is a sturdy vibrospear designed for hunting large and dangerous wild game. Equipped with LaserHone's patented ultrasonic vibrotechnology, the vibrogenerator in the Huntsman vibrates at frequencies well outside the hearing range of most sentients. The ultrasonic vibrogenerator, special dampening fittings, and a coating of sound-absorbing polymers make the Huntsman completely silent when active. This allows a hunter to carry a powerful vibroweapon in the field without the fear of spooking his prey with the noise from the weapon.

The Huntsman's haft is a super-dense plasteel alloy embedded with sound-deadening materials and laced with foil-fiber reinforcements. Incredibly strong and flexible, the Huntsman can parry nearly any incoming blow, from the claws of a powerful beast to the slashing edge of a vibro-ax. The blade is a long, thin, leaf-shaped affair made from a laser-honed steel alloy with a molecular edge that can pass through steel and stone as easy as through flesh and muscle. At the base of the blade where it meets the haft, two thick posts extend for a few centimeters perpendicular to the haft to prevent particularly recalcitrant beasts from charging up the haft after being stabbed and attacking the spear's wielder. While it is more of a niche weapon with limited appeal, many professional scouts and hunters appreciate the deadly simplicity of the Huntsman and the challenge of hunting untamed beasts in ways similar to their ancient forebears.

The vibrospear requires two hands to wield.

MK. VIII VIBROSAW

Greel Wood Logging Corporation is a small, privately owned logging concern founded solely for the harvesting the of the highly sought-after Greel trees from the third and fourth planets of the Pii System. Greels are hardy, ancient trees that produce an extremely dense, deep-crimson hardwood. Thanks to the resilience of the trees and the difficulty of harvesting them, GWLC developed special tools to aid in logging and processing. Working closely with a number of precision industrial toolmakers from the Corporate Sector, GWLC produced a line of saws, heavy equipment, specialized heavy-lift speedertrucks, and other assorted logging machinery for their personal use, and eventually they sold them to the general public. Marketed mainly to industrial logging concerns, many of these tools are also used in the surveying and exploration of newly discovered planets, especially those with dense and thorny flora. One of the more common GWLC tools is the Mk. VIII Vibrosaw.

Loud and extremely challenging to use, the Mk. VIII is a heavy vibrosaw that can cut through the toughest undergrowth or fell the tallest trees. They are heavy, awkward brutes that, in the hands of the inexperienced or inattentive, can cause more damage to the user than to the surrounding flora. The Mk. VIII consists of a blocky chassis containing the saw's controls, two SureGrip handles, a power pack, a drive motor, and a vibrofield generator. The blade mounted to the front of the chassis is long and thin, ringed by a rotating, high-speed, diamond-toothed chain whose already impressive cutting ability is further augmented by a powerful vibrofield. Although not designed as such, the Mk. VIII can be used as a weapon in an emergency, its blade slicing through flesh and bone as easily as root and branch. Caution must be used when doing so, however, as even the slightest miscalculation or misstep can result in the user receiving gruesome injuries from his own saw.

If the user generates ▽ when using the Mk. VIII as a weapon, he hits himself with the attack instead of his target (even if the attack would normally miss). The Mk. VIII requires two hands to use.

EXPLORATION GEAR

Life in the *Star Wars* galaxy is, for better or worse, defined by its technology. The countless billions of sentients living in the Core Worlds spend their days in constant contact with incredibly advanced technologies that assist, oversee, and control every aspect of their lives. Droids cook their meals and care for their children, the cacophony of the holonet feeds them their news and entertainment, lightning-fast speeders whisk them across continents in minutes, and powerful starships bridge the gulf between star systems in an instant. This symbiosis with technology, its constant presence in the lives of so many, is taken for granted by people of all classes in the Core. Even the poorest, least-privileged laborer possesses a number of technological devices that, on some of the more far-flung worlds of the galaxy, would mark him as a wealthy man indeed. In the wild places of the Outer Rim, however, the relationship between people and technology has quite a different tenor.

While those in the Core rely on modern technology to make their lives easier, individuals in the Outer Rim rely on it to stay alive. Civilized society is rare in the Outer Rim, and settled planets are few and far between. Many of these civilized outposts are little more than crude settlements, peopled by colonists and moisture farmers trying to wring a living out of an unforgiving planet. Others are violent, decadent spaceports full of vice and danger, ready to strip an unsuspecting being of his money, his valuables, and even his very life. Then there are the vast stretches of empty space traversed by itinerant traders, small merchant companies, pirates, smugglers, and all manner of space-borne vagabonds. Out in these farthest reaches, where the nearest planet is days or weeks away and nothing stands between a pilot and eternity but a thin durasteel deck plate three meters square, luxury is nonexistent. A spacer must rely on his wits, his blaster, his ship, and his friends—if he has any—to make it through.

The following section presents a number of new pieces of equipment appropriate for the exploration-minded character. Everything from sturdy clothing and storage options to survival equipment and specialized droids can be found on the following pages.

ARMOR AND CLOTHING

In the Outer Rim, what an individual wears is as much a calling card as a blaster pistol or an Imperial insignia. The clothes on a being's back tell a tale as eloquent as any holonet drama. They speak of his priorities, how and where he works, his state and status in life, and the ways in which he wishes to present himself to the galaxy at large. Armored plates sewn into clothing, gun belts loaded with firepower, and bandoliers slung across torsos are the hallmarks of bounty hunters and other guns for hire. Tool belts, bulging carryall bags, and coveralls smudged with machine fluids are the mark of a technician, and a flight suit sets a pilot apart in any crowd. Those who spend their time and make their living exploring and exploiting the vast empty places in the Rim are just as easily spotted. Well-worn clothes, battered packs, and goggles scratched by the dust of a thousand worlds tell of the many countless kilometers these hardy souls have traveled. Presented below are a number of new suits of clothing and armor, as well as some storage solutions tailored to the wandering lifestyle of the explorer.

ENVIRO-SUIT

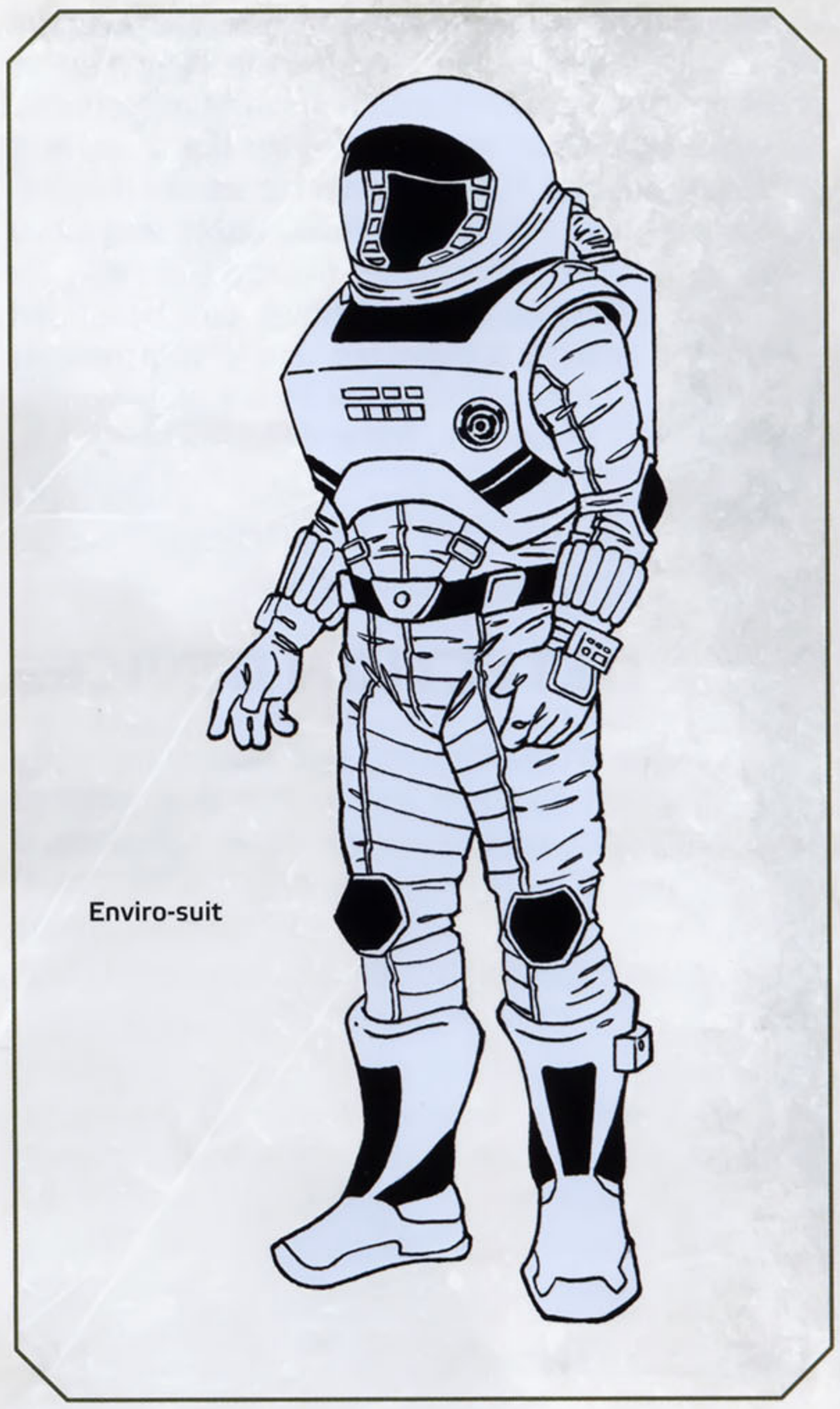
The number of different types of environments found in the galaxy is staggering. Every world has its own unique mix of gravity, atmosphere, and environment that forms the beings who dwell upon it. While there are numerous worlds that are considered just right in that a substantial percentage of sentient species can dwell there in relative comfort, the great majority of planets, moons, asteroids, and star bases are toxic to at least one species, if not more. To allow those with sensitive systems to operate safely in the galaxy at large, numerous companies produce enviro-suits.

Enviro-suits come in a dizzying array of patterns and styles. At their most basic, enviro-suits are fully sealed, full-body suits made of sturdy materials designed to keep sentients alive in inhospitable places. They protect their wearers from toxic environments, radiological, biological, and chemical hazards, extremes of temperature, and variations of atmospheric

TABLE 2-3: ARMOR AND CLOTHING

Type	Defense	Soak	Price	Enc	HP	Rarity
Enviro-suit	0	2	750	2	1	2
Shockrider Crash Suit	0	2	3,000	2	1	3
Tracker Utility Vest	0	0	100	-	1	2
Mountaineer Armor	1	1	1,800	3	2	6

pressure. With the right suit, a wearer can withstand the vacuum of space, the depths of the deepest oceans, and even atmospheres that are little more than choking miasmas of poisonous gasses. While most enviro-suits on the market have built-in monitoring systems that can self-adjust to a wearer's particular needs and are therefore appropriate for a variety of users, some are custom built and fitted for those species with especially delicate or bizarre physiologies. Enviro-suits typically have numerous attachment points and interface sockets for the use of jetpacks, external tanks for those with specific environmental needs, and storage pockets. Enviro-suits have an operational life of eight hours until they need to be recharged and have their gasses and fluids refilled. Thanks to their many layers of protective shielding, enviro-suits tend to be bulky and reduce a wearer's sense of his surroundings. An individual wearing an enviro-suit suffers ■ to any Agility- or Perception-based checks while wearing the suit.



Enviro-suit

A/KT SHOCKRIDER CRASH SUIT

Specially designed for those who make their living behind the wheel, the Shockrider crash suits from Ayelixe/Krongbing Textiles Corporation are built to help pilots of speeders, speeder bikes, swoops, and other fast atmospheric vehicles survive even the worst crashes. Made of tough synthetic materials reinforced with a light armored mesh, a crash suit consists of a snug-fitting full-body suit with heavy fasteners, gloves, boots, and a helmet. All of these components fit together to grant the greatest protection possible to the wearer. They are also reinforced with special impact-absorbing gel inserts at strategic areas, like the spine, elbows, knees, hips, palms of the hands, and shoulders. This helps mitigate shocks to the areas of the body that are typically the first to take damage in an accident. In addition to these protections, the materials of a crash suit are also embedded with a fire- and radiation-proof chemical to help wearers survive the fires that often break out during crashes.

Thanks to their durable construction and integrated armor, crash suits reduce any strain received from Critical Hits dealt to the wearer's vehicle by 1 (to a minimum of 1) and the flame-resistant coating reduces damage dealt to the wearer by fires by 1.

A/KT TRACKER UTILITY VEST

Common among outdoorsmen, scouts, and hunters, the Tracker Utility Vest from Ayelixe/Krongbing Textiles Corporation is the Explorer's best friend. These vests are simple sleeveless garments worn on the torso and made from lightweight, durable, stain-resistant, tear-resistant synthetic textiles that close in front with a heavy-duty zipper. They are covered with numerous pouches of various size, shape, and utility, which are all connected to an integral load-bearing system concealed beneath the vest's lining. When fully zipped, the garment distributes the weight of anything carried in its pouches evenly and effectively across the wearer's body, allowing the wearer to carry his important tools and items where he can reach them quickly and without them weighing him down overmuch or getting in his way.

When worn, the Tracker utility vest increases the wearer's encumbrance threshold by 2.

A/KT MOUNTAINEER ARMOR

Another offering from the utilitarians at the Ayelixe/Krongbing Textiles Corporation, the Mountaineer is a suit of light, flexible armor designed to assist the wearer in climbing and navigating mountainous terrain. Made from a thick, tear-resistant textile with excellent thermal-retention qualities and interwoven with a patented foil-fiber armor weave, Mountaineer armor provides good protection from impacts, abrasions, and falls. In addition to the armor weave, the suit is reinforced at the shoulders, knees, and elbows with impact-absorbing polymer pads and is equipped

with an integral climbing and support harness. The palms of the gloves and soles of the light, flexible boots are coated in FrictionGrip, a material produced by A/KT that adheres to even the smoothest surface. The entire suit consists of the one-piece jumpsuit, gloves, boots, and a helmet. Accessories like oxygen tanks for high-altitude climbing can be added for a nominal fee, and all attachments for such accessories are already integrated into the armor.

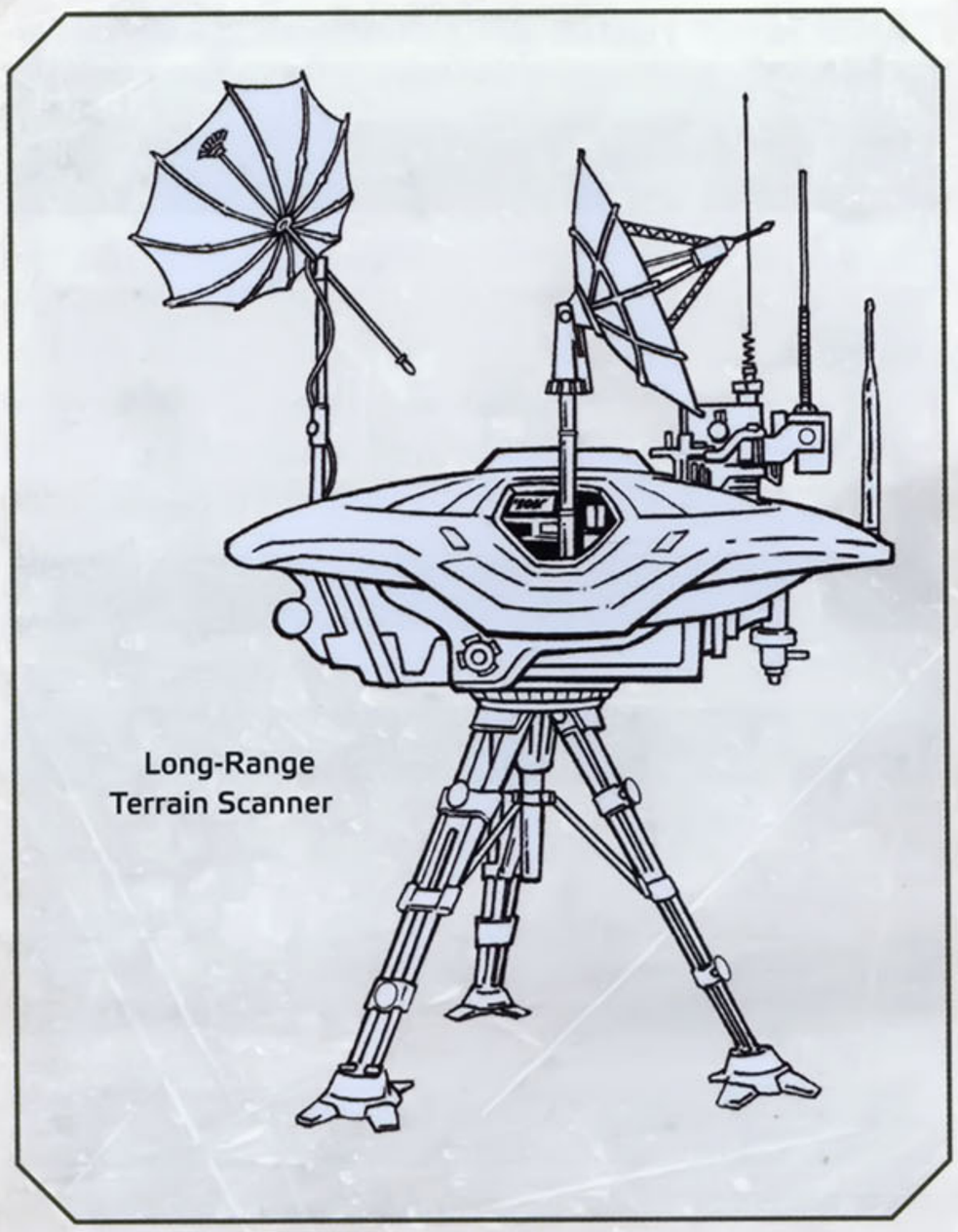
Mountaineer armor grants the wearer ■■ to all Athletics skill checks made to climb or rappel.

DETECTION DEVICES

The production and sale of personal-scale sensor systems and personal electronics for both recreational and professional use is one of the largest industries in the galaxy. From media players and datapads to sensor packs that can see through ten meters of solid stone and goggles that allow an individual to see in the dark by any number of esoteric means, nearly every sentient in the galaxy owns at least a handful of personal electronic items. While the market for personal electronics certainly exists in the Outer Rim, it is geared toward the sale of survival, surveying, and scholarly equipment rather than the technological fripperies so popular on the Core Worlds. The companies that do business among the frontier worlds of the Outer Rim know their customers well, and they provide a broad selection of hardy, practical electronics geared toward the professional explorer.

CRYONCORP ENHANCESCAN LONG-RANGE TERRAIN SCANNER

A variation on CryonCorp's successful EnhanceScan personal-scanner line of products, the Long-Range Terrain Scanner was developed with the professional explorer in mind. The LRTS uses a limited-power ground-following radar of the kind typically found on military airspeeders for low-level instrument flying. Typically mounted to slow-flying airspeeders or small landspeeders with a reasonably high maximum altitude, the LRTS allows a scouting team to make a comprehensive topographical map of a new planet quickly and efficiently. The radar transceiver is mated to a broadband sensor suite and mapping program that takes in billions of bits of data per second. In game terms,



the LRTS has a range of long and can map quite a large area of ground in a single pass. Depending on the atmospheric conditions, the size of the area being mapped, and numerous other variables, the time required to thoroughly map an area can take from a few hours to a few days of concentrated effort.

Successfully using the LRTS requires an **Average (◆◆) Computers check** on the part of the operator. Maps produced with the LRTS add ▢ to any Survival check made to navigate using the map plus an automatic ✲ for every two ❍ gained on the Computers check.

CRYONCORP GROUND-PENETRATING SENSOR PACK

Another sensor suite produced by CryonCorp, the GPSP is a powerful ground-penetrating radar suite marketed to companies involved in gas and minerals exploration and chartered search and rescue. Little more than a bulky stack of fine-tuned sensors mounted in an impact and weather-resistant plasteel case, the GPSP uses a powerful ground-penetrating radar array to look through solid objects to see what lies beneath. Either carried slung over an operator's shoulder by a stout strap or mounted to a small repulsor cart, the GPSP can see through soil, dense stone of various types, most kinds of ores and processed metals, organic and inorganic debris, duracrete, ferrocrete, and nearly any other kind of substance that might be encountered. Recently, CryonCorp has released an updated version of the GPSP geared more toward scholarly exploration, with a radar array specially tuned for penetration of inorganic, artificially produced building materials like the kind found in the ruins of ancient cities. Using a GPSP does not require a skill check, but interpreting the unit's findings might. If the Game Master sees fit, he can require a Computers skill check to figure out what exactly the GPSP is seeing.

IDELLIAN ARRAYS ILF-6500 LIFE FORM SCANNER

A more powerful variant of Idellian Arrays's ILF-5000, the ILF-6500 is one of the most powerful long-range, omnidirectional life-form scanners on the market. With a database containing information on thousands of known species of wildlife and with space for recording new data, the ILF-6500 is most often used as the center of a security perimeter for scout or hunting encampments. Mounted on a telescoping tripod that can extend up to three meters and capable of monitoring an area nearly half a kilometer across depending on terrain and vegetation, this scanner can track and identify up to two dozen targets at a time, categorize and rank them in order of threat level, and alert its operators either by sending updates to their datapads or sounding a shrill alarm.

Setting up the ILF-6500 requires either an **Average (◆◆) Survival check** or a **Hard (◆◆◆) Education** or **Computers check** to ensure that the device is properly calibrated and located in the best possible area for taking full advantage of its scanning capabilities.

HUNTING GOGGLES

Produced by a number of well-known manufacturers of sensors and scanners, hunting goggles are a kind of scanner goggle specifically designed to assist professional guides and hunters in tracking their quarry. Along with the usual light-amplification and thermal-imaging sensors found in most scanner goggles, hunting goggles are equipped with an image magnification and enhancement system, a short-range motion detector, and a targeting system and micro heads-up display that projects aiming reticules and targeting information into the wearer's field of vision. Hunting goggles sharpen the wearer's vision to a preternatural degree, and they allow him to see clearly in the dark and through fog, smoke, haze, and other obscuring agents. All of these systems combine to make a highly useful piece of equipment for those who make their livings stalking beasts and sentients through the Outer Rim.

Hunting Goggles grant ▢ to any Perception skill checks made to locate prey, and thanks to their image magnification and enhancement, they remove up to ■■ imposed due to concealment, darkness, or fog and mist from all Ranged (Light) and Ranged (Heavy) checks.

MEDICAL

Any first-rate explorer knows that one should never venture into the unknown without a proper medical kit. Once beyond civilization, even a simple injury can become life-threatening without medical attention.

CAPC ECM-598 MEDICAL BACKPACK

Produced by Chiewab Amalgamated Pharmaceuticals Company for use by military forces and search-and-rescue companies, the ECM-598 is the latest word in portable medical equipment. Essentially a scaled-up medpac, the ECM-598 contains a clinic's worth of medical equipment, drugs, tools, scanners, and other contents needed to keep a team of explorers alive in the field. All of this equipment is securely packed into a sturdy internal-frame backpack. It also includes a slim datapad containing an emergency-procedure database for most of the known sentient species in the galaxy, as well as tutorials to assist those with no medical training in treating wounded individuals in an emergency. The ECM-598 even includes a collapsible repulsor stretcher with a weight limit of 150 kilograms for evacuating seriously wounded personnel.

The ECM-598 medical backpack allows characters to attempt to heal others using Medicine checks without penalty, as detailed on page 219 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook. In addition, it grants ☐ to all Medicine checks made while using the ECM-598 and, thanks to the tutorials and information on the datapad, individuals using this decrease the difficulty of any Medicine checks they make to heal Critical Injuries by 1 to a minimum of **Easy (◆)**.

SURVIVAL

Day-to-day survival in the galaxy is never a certainty. The risks inherent in a modern lifestyle that involves space travel, contact with exotic alien species, ever-shifting political forces, and the constant threat of violence are certainly mitigated by the order imposed among the Core Worlds. However, out on the Rim, at the edge of the galaxy, where laws are lax or nonexistent and there is little modern infrastructure, daily survival is a greater concern. In the pockets of civilization scattered around the Outer Rim, things are much like they are in the Core. In the wild places, though, on undiscovered planets and savage worlds where deadly flora and fauna await unwary explorers, the only food, shelter, and protection to be found are those that an individual carries with him.

In the Outer Rim, there is a thriving market for survival gear. Items like emergency shelters, water and food purifying systems, and medical supplies are in great demand, and much of the commerce to and from the Corporate Sector and Core Worlds is composed of items designed to keep sentients alive in the wilderness. Presented here is a selection of items designed to assist Explorers in their work.

TABLE 2-4: TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

Item	Price	Encum	Rarity
Detection Devices			
Long-Range Terrain Scanner	850	6	6
Ground-Penetrating Sensor Pack	950	5	7
Life Form Scanner	900	4	5
Hunting Goggles	600	0	5
Medical			
Medical Backpack	450	2	4
Survival			
Syntherope (20 meters)	5	1	1
Electro-snare	50	1	5
Portable Survival Shelter	200	2	4
Electric Perimeter Fence	800	6	5
Personal Distress Beacon	50	-	1
Field Kitchen	500	5	4
Field Dressing Kit	300	3	5
Tools			
Modular Backpack	75	-	1
Modular Backpack Extra Pouch	15	-	1
Beast Call	100	1	3
Burning Gel	150	1	5
Chem Lure	125	1	4
Excavator's Precision Tool Kit	500	5	7
Surveyor's Bag	50	-	1
Spacer's Duffel	50	-	0
Specimen Containers (Tiny)	10	0	1
Specimen Containers (Small)	25	1	2
Specimen Containers (Medium)	50	3	2
Specimen Containers (Large)	150	5	3
Audio/Visual Translator	750	1	3

DEGAN EXPLORATIONS SYNTHEROPE

Degan Explorations, a subsidiary of the Chiewab Amalgamated Pharmaceuticals Company, is mostly known for its vast network of professional scouts and survey crews that scour the Outer Rim for new chemical resources. In addition to their exploratory work, they are also the makers of Syntherope, a synthetic rope used in nearly every industry. Made from a mix of natural and synthetic chemicals and textiles, including the proteins found in the secretions of numerous arachnid species, Syntherope is thin, lightweight, and extremely strong, with a tensile strength ten times that of durasteel. Sold in twenty-meter spools, Syntherope is used primarily for climbing, rappelling, and securing cargo, but it can be used anywhere a good stout rope is needed. It is said that at the bottom of every backpack, pannier, and cargo crate in the Outer Rim there lies a coil of Syntherope, and while that statement is obviously hyperbole, it's also not too far from the truth.

ELECTRO-SNARE

There are countless devices in the galaxy designed to incapacitate a target or prey animal so that it can be captured alive. These include stun batons, gas grenades, and even low-powered blaster rifles used to short circuit a sentient's nervous system and render him unconscious. One of the smallest, simplest devices is the ubiquitous electro-snare. Little more than a power pack, an energy-discharge node, and a proximity sensor contained in a light metal frame, electro-snares are produced by many manufacturers in the galaxy. Simple and effective, electro-snares are difficult to detect, nearly foolproof, and one of the safest and most humane stun devices on the market.

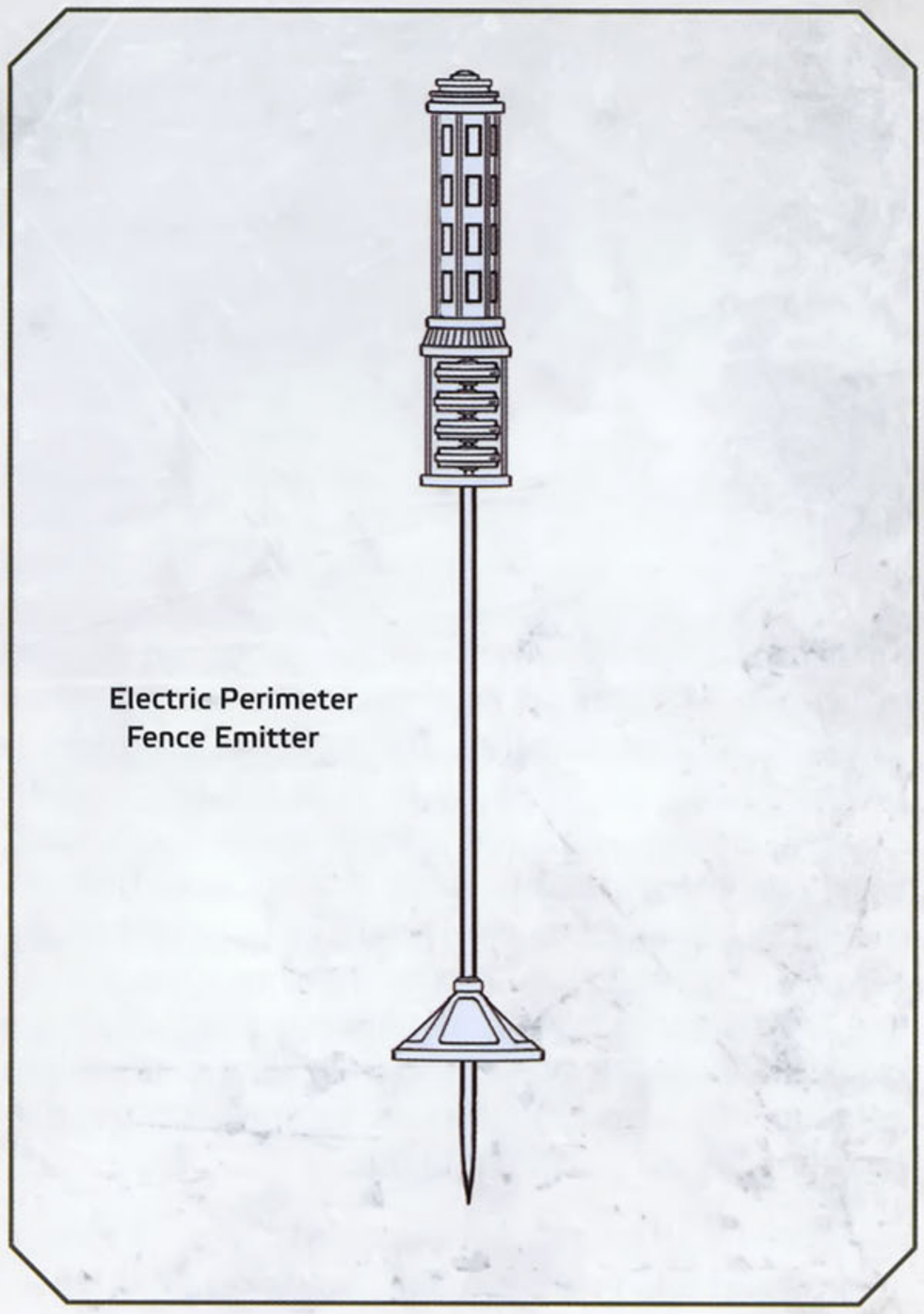
To use an electro-snare, an individual must make a **Survival check** to set and conceal the snare with a difficulty set by the Game Master based on surrounding environmental factors. Once successfully hidden, any animal or sentient approaching the snare must make an **Opposed Perception check** against the Survival skill of the character who originally set the snare. If the snare remains undetected, it fires a powerful stun blast at the target once it enters engaged range, automatically hitting and dealing 10 stun damage (the damage is applied to the target's strain threshold but does not ignore soak), plus 2 additional damage per ✡ scored on the initial Survival check.

GANDORTHRAL PORTABLE SURVIVAL SHELTER

The Portable Survival Shelter by Gandorthral Atmospherics is a marvel of modern materials science and survival technology. Common throughout the galaxy, especially among sportsmen and explorers, the PSS is a collapsible, one-person shelter packed with advanced life-sustaining equipment. Made of sturdy textiles and supported by a unique flexible internal frame, it packs easily, sets up quickly, and provides more than adequate protection from even the harshest environments. The advanced textiles that compose the structure have a natural heat-exchanging property that keeps the interior of the shelter at a constant comfortable temperature no matter what the external temperature is. The shelter is weatherproof, and a special foil-fiber mesh is woven into the fabric that makes it flameproof and able to withstand lightning strikes. portable survival shelters are also equipped with a water-reclamation system that is designed to double a user's carried water supplies. When stowed, these items are about the size of a large datapad and pack easily in a backpack, pannier, or shoulder bag. Unfolding the shelter makes it spring immediately to shape, and within the span of a minute it is ready for use.

PORTABLE ELECTRIC PERIMETER FENCE

Made by a number of manufacturers throughout the galaxy, portable electric perimeter fences use beams of coherent energy to make a protective barrier around encampments, outposts, or any other sensitive areas that require extra security. Composed of a powerful energy generator and a number of sturdy plasteel posts equipped with repeater/booster modules and long anchoring spikes, these fences are con-





SALADAR SYSTEMS PED-21 DISTRESS BEACON

Ubiquitous among spacers, explorers, and other professionals in the galaxy, the PED-21 is a personal emergency distress beacon carried in case of accident or misfortune. Around the size of a glow rod and weighing next to nothing, the PED-21 uses a high-powered, long-range transmitter to broadcast a short, constantly repeating emergency message across all common search-and-rescue comm frequencies. The PED-21 can be programmed to repeat its message in up to twelve preprogrammed languages and has a power-pack life of seventy-two standard hours. It can be manually triggered or linked to a monitoring system, such as those found in survival suits or sealed armor, and set to activate automatically when the wearer's bio signs reach a preprogrammed threshold. The signal broadcast by the PED-21 can be picked up from low orbit on most worlds and from many kilometers away depending on atmospheric conditions, terrain, and a number of other variables.

Anyone searching for an individual with an active PED-21 gains □□ to any Perception, Computers, or Surveillance checks made in the course of the search.

structed by simply finding a safe place for the generator and placing the posts along the desired perimeter. Once the perimeter is set, the generator is hooked up to one of the posts to provide the energy. When the generator is activated, the power it produces is projected and amplified by each of the fence posts, creating a nearly impassable fence made of crackling, humming energy beams. Basic models must be completely deactivated to allow anything to pass through, but the more advanced models have controls that allow for the various sections between posts to be activated and deactivated at will. Anyone coming into contact with a portable electric perimeter fence suffers the effects of a stun grenade.

SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT INC. FIELD KITCHEN

An ingenious way to stay fed in the wilderness, the Field Kitchen is the latest offering from SurvivalEquipment Inc. Designed for large, semipermanent encampments, like hunting camps or forward-scout bases, the field kitchen includes all the tools needed to feed a small number of sentients for extended periods of time. Packed in a broad, flat, impact-resistant case, the field kitchen includes a small, high-output induction-cooking range and oven combination, a selection of stacking pots and pans, a set of good-quality knives, cooking utensils, a water-purification system, a food sterilizer, and a flash-freezing and vacuum-sealing system for

storing food. Also included is a datapad containing a nutritional database outlining the daily nutritional needs for most of the galaxy's known sentient species, an exhaustive guide to identifying, foraging, and eating wild plants, basic cooking instructions, and a database of recipes optimized for cooking in the wilderness.

Setting up a field kitchen takes about thirty standard minutes. Thanks to the efficient design and the information included in the datapad, using a field kitchen grants ☐☐ to any Survival or Education skill checks made to store, identify, cook, or sterilize comestibles (and can, at the GM's discretion, allow the processing of foods that normally could not be made edible).

SURVIVALEQUIPMENT INC. VISCERA FIELD DRESSING KIT

When hunting for sustenance or for pure sport, most hunters kill their prey in the field as opposed to trapping it and taking a live—and possibly quite angry—animal back to camp. Quite often these creatures weigh hundreds of kilograms, and even the most well-equipped hunting party balks at dragging a large, dead prey animal overland for many kilometers. To this end, most prey is butchered in the field, its innards removed and the usable meat cut from the carcass and stored in cooling chests for easy transportation. Referred to as field dressing, the act of cleaning and gutting an animal is a bloody and time-consuming task that, like most other complex tasks, can be made quicker and easier through the use of proper tools. For the discerning hunter, SurvivalEquipment Inc. sells the popular and easily carried Viscera Field Dressing Kit.

The Viscera Field Dressing Kit contains a selection of saws and knives of various shapes and sizes, gut hooks, spring-loaded shears, a portable vacuum packer, sturdy gloves, and a ten-meter coil of extremely strong and incredibly thin synthetic rope. The blades of the tools are all made of a resilient, precision-laser-ground, durasteel-reinforced crystal-ceramic that keeps its edge far longer than other types of knives. These tools come in a compact, locking, impact-resistant polymer case with custom-cut form-fitted recesses for each knife, hook, and saw. The case also contains a small, low-storage datapad with anatomical charts for most known sport and food animals, as well as charts showing different cuts of meat, butchery instructions, sanitation instructions, and other helpful tips for dressing a kill.

Using the Viscera Field Dressing Kit grants a hunter ☐ to any Survival skill checks made to harvest meat, organs, or bones from a prey animal.

TOOLS

Few things are worse than a shoddily made, poor-quality tool, especially for those who live and die by the quality of the implements they possess. Explorers often require a dizzying array of tools that would put a shipwright to shame, especially those explorers who make their living digging up the ancient secrets of the galaxy. Thankfully, even in the most benighted areas of the Outer Rim, quality tools can be acquired from a number of legitimate and illegitimate sources. Below are a number of new tools available for the discerning stellar explorer to assist him in his work, from repair kits to simple duffel bags.

CRESHALDYNE MK. IV MODULAR BACKPACK

The convenient Mk. IV Modular Backpack is manufactured by Creshaldyne Industries and marketed almost exclusively to military and governmental forces. Designed with scouts, reconnaissance troopers, and explorers in mind, these backpacks are large and sturdy, made from weatherproof textiles and equipped with an internal frame to help support the weight of the load carried. The backpack has one large compartment with four smaller compartments on the exterior. Each compartment can be sealed and unsealed quickly with a specially designed, silent tear-away textile sealer that keeps the contents of the backpack safe, secure, and dry. What makes this backpack unique is the number of different pouches that can be purchased and attached to the exterior by way of Creshaldyne's proprietary modular quick-release system. This allows the user to customize his backpack for the job at hand, adding extra pouches for contents like ammunition, optical equipment, or specialized hunting gear.

The Mk. IV Modular Backpack increases the user's encumbrance threshold by 3, plus an additional 1 point of encumbrance threshold for each accessory pouch to a maximum of 3.

BEAST CALL

Made by a number of companies, most notably Fabritech, beast calls are some of the more simple and effective tools used by hunters and trappers. Little more than a small audio-playback machine encased in a sturdy, impact-resistant shell, a beast call is used to lure creatures out of hiding by speaking to them in their own language. They contain a sophisticated audio-signal modulator similar to those used by droid manufacturers to give their creations voice, as well as a nearly bottomless programmable database capable of holding the various screeches, howls, and calls of numerous known animal species throughout the galaxy. Along with the preprogrammed database, these devices can also record sounds, allowing a user to build his own sound library generated by previously unknown creatures.

To use, a hunter simply sets the type of beast he wants to attract, places the beast call in a convenient area, and activates it. The call then plays back the ap-

propriate sounds at varying pitches and volumes until a creature or creatures are attracted or the user turns the device off. The sounds produced by the beast call are so realistic that members of the species being imitated are hard pressed not to come as quickly as they can to investigate.

Using a beast call to lure an animal requires no skill check, but the beast being targeted must make an **Average (◆◆) Discipline check** to resist the call. To record a particular beast's call to use later, the user must make an **Average (◆◆) Computers check** modified by any other environmental conditions (heavy background noise, atmospheric interference, etc).

CORCHEMCO "QUICKFLASH" BURNING GEL

Burning gel is an electrochemical hull-breaching agent synthesized and sold by the Corellian Chemical Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of Chiewab Amalgamated Pharmaceuticals. Colloquially referred to as the "shipwright's spare key," burning gel is used to gain access to doors, hatchways, and machine compartments that have been rendered inaccessible. When applied, it quickly burns through nearly any substance, in any environment, including the vacuum of space. It is commonly used to cut holes in starships that are derelict or otherwise damaged and adrift in space and is quite popular among salvage outfits, archaeologists, and other less savory characters. Unlike cutting torches and welders, it emits no flame and requires no oxygen to operate, making it preferable for use in a vacuum.

The gel itself consists of two parts: a stable, extremely caustic acid suspended in a clear gel that adheres to nearly any substance and a pair of thin electrodes. Both parts are contained in a dispenser unit that includes a refillable tank of gel and electrode wire, a tiny power generator, and a pistol-grip applicator. When the applicator trigger is squeezed, a measure of gel is released from the applicator along with the wires contained within. Once the desired amount of burning gel has been applied, the power generator is activated, running a quick, high-powered charge through the gel and activating the acid, which immediately begins eating away at whatever it's been applied to.

For rules purposes, exposure to burning gel deals damage to materials and sentient beings as if it were a weapon. It deals 10 damage and has the Burn 5 and Pierce 5 weapon qualities. Using burning gel requires no skill check. However, placing it correctly and effectively might, at the Game Master's discretion, require a Mechanics check.

CORCHEMCO BEASTMASTER CHEM LURE

Similar to the beast call, the Beastmaster Chem Lure by CorChemCo is designed to attract beasts to a place where they can be easily captured or killed. However, where the beast call uses sound and recording technology, the Beastmaster does so through the use of pheromones. Small and easy to conceal (around the size of a typical datapad), the Beastmaster contains an exhaustive database listing the genetic codes of most known species in the galaxy. With the creature database and an onboard testing and recording suite that contains a DNA sequencer and a chemical synthesizer, the Beastmaster can create nearly any pheromone, musk, or other biological secretion. It can also be programmed with new DNA if it is provided with a physical sample such as blood, hair, skin, or bone.

To use, a hunter first chooses his creature from the database or creates a new entry with a sample. Then he simply conceals the chemical lure, retreats to an upwind location, and settles in to wait. The Beastmaster uses the DNA information stored in the database to synthesize the correct chemical, aerosolizes it, and then slowly releases it over the course of one standard hour. The synthetic pheromones are incredibly hard for a targeted beast to resist, and the Beastmaster typically has a better chance of luring in its prey than a beast call or other apparatus.

Creatures targeted by the Beastmaster must make a **Hard (◆◆◆) Discipline check** to resist, otherwise they come as quickly as possible to investigate. These items are often used with electro-snares or other live-trapping equipment to capture exotic animals alive for use as pets, zoo animals, and research subjects. Using the Beastmaster does not require a skill check, although placing it in the best position might, at the Game Master's discretion, require a Survival check.

LORONAR CORPORATION EXCAVATOR PRECISION TOOL KIT

Galactic civilization is incredibly ancient. Sentient beings have been plying the spacelanes and settling planets for millennia. Cities, empires, and even entire civilizations have risen, flourished, and fallen numerous times in countless places in the galaxy. Occasionally, these ancient peoples left behind great works of engineering—ancient cities, vast orbiting shipyards, lonesome abandoned space stations, huge necropolises, and the like—but mostly they drove themselves into oblivion, and the only remains are shattered remnants and half-remembered stories. Throughout the galaxy, intrepid sentients of all species who possess a wandering spirit and a thirst for knowledge sift through the remains of the ancient past to both help understand where the species of the galaxy have been and where the future is taking them. To help these adventurous scholars with their labors, numerous precision-tool makers in the galaxy produce tool kits of varying size and quality that make an attempt to be both compact and all-inclusive. By far the most popular of these tool kits is the Excavator Precision Tool Kit from Loronar Corporation.

Designed for and marketed to scholars, historians, and archaeologists, the PTK contains a number of well-crafted hand tools and essential accessories for excavation of ancient sites and general exploration. Included are a number of hand spades and brushes of various size, a multitool, a stout knife, a pair of spring-loaded shears for cutting roots and vines, metal and ferroceramic files for sharpening tools, writing utensils, sample bags of various sizes, adhesive and string tags for categorizing finds, measuring equipment, a small spool of monofilament, and small picks, hammers, and mallets of different weights and material. All of this, along with a small, slimline datapad with high-definition recording capabilities, is all housed in a sturdy, lockable, weatherproof carrying case.

SURVEYOR'S BAG

Surveyor's bags are made by numerous companies and are marketed to the men and women tasked with exploring and mapping the wild places of the galaxy. The bag itself has a vertical rectangular body with one large compartment, and it is typically worn over the shoulder and across the body, with the bag resting on the wearer's hip or at the small of his back. They are constructed of thick, hard-wearing, weatherproof synthetic textiles designed to stand up to heavy usage and protect the bag's contents from impact, the elements, and foreign-matter damage. The large compartment can hold all manner of equipment and has a sleeve sewn inside that fits most common datapads and portable computers. The exterior of the bag holds a number of covered pouches of different shapes and sizes, with additional clips, straps, and loops for extra carrying and storage. A single large flap folds down and securely covers the main compartment and most of the external pouches. The inside of the flap has a weatherproof, see-through pouch for storing maps, charts, and other references for quick access and easy reading.

Surprisingly roomy for their compact size, surveyor's bags increase the user's encumbrance threshold by 2.

SPACER'S DUFFEL

Most sentients who make their livings as common crew aboard large civilian vessels tend to be lifelong transients, wandering from ship to ship and world to world in search of employment. A spacer might serve on dozens of ships during his career and travel untold millions of light-years, his only home the crew berths of cargo ships and the hostels, bars, and entertainment districts of spaceports. Such beings tend to travel light, carrying their entire lives with them from job to job in large cylinder-shaped bags colloquially known as spacer's duffels. Roughly half the size of a grown human and featuring one large compartment, a sturdy zipper, and a single shoulder strap, spacer's duffels have become a symbol of the free-and-easy life of the common spacer. Made by many different textile and storage-technology companies, these bags are as essential a piece of kit to the survival of a spacer as his certificates and his spacesuit. Among ship captains and recruiting agents, one of the most common sights in the spacelanes is a grizzled spacer with a hopeful look on his face, approaching with his duffel slung over his shoulder to inquire about work.

Spacer's duffels increase the user's encumbrance threshold by 2 but also have the Cumbersome 3 quality.

SPECIMEN CONTAINERS

Made by numerous scientific-technology companies throughout the galaxy, such as Loronar Corporation and SoroSuub, specimen containers are ubiquitous among explorers who need to transport delicate or dangerous flora and fauna. They come in all shapes and sizes, from the simple petri dish to massive, environmentally sealed and controlled containers designed to hold the largest and most lethal creatures. No matter their size, shape, or manufacture, specimen containers all possess a set of common features and systems. They are constructed from sturdy impact-resistant polymers and have secure environmentally sealed lids.



They are generally transparent, the interiors of specimen containers are modular and can be configured to fit a number of small specimens or one large one. They are also usually equipped with life-support and stasis systems that allow specimens to be safely transported.

Specimen containers come in four general sizes, as follows: tiny, small, medium, and large. Tiny specimen containers have an encumbrance capacity of 1 and are typically roughly the size of a human's hand. Small specimen containers have an encumbrance capacity of 3–5 and range up to the size of an R2 series astromech droid. Medium specimen containers have an encumbrance capacity of 5–10 and typically require two or more sentients to lift and carry them. Large specimen containers have an encumbrance capacity of 10–15 and are designed to carry the largest and heaviest specimens. These last containers are so large that they have their own repulsorlift generators to assist in their handling. They have a maximum altitude of roughly one meter and move as quickly as they can be pushed.

TRANLANG HOLO V AUDIO/VISUAL TRANSLATOR

The Holo V A/V Translator is a small, handheld translating device produced by TranLang. Based on the software architecture of the popular TranLang III Communicator Module installed in 3PO and LOM-series protocol droids, the Holo V is slightly less powerful than the TL III but makes up for that small deficiency by being more versatile. Roughly the size of an average datapad, the Holo V is programmed with millions of forms of known verbal and written communication. In addition, it also includes a high-definition audio/video recording device with powerful pattern recognition and analysis software. With this, the Holo V can translate known spoken languages in real time, analyze and attempt to translate unknown spoken languages, and read and decode text, pictograms, hieroglyphics, and other forms of written communication.

The Holo V grants the scholar or translator ■ to any Lore or Intellect checks made to decipher or translate an unknown language.

DROIDS

Among the most wonderfully varied commodities in the galaxy, droids inhabit a unique niche in society. They fill a multitude of technical, scientific, domestic, bureaucratic, and military roles, and do so with speed, efficiency, and alacrity.

In the Outer Rim, where society is less stratified and class oriented than it is in the Core Worlds, most droids are seen as just another sentient trying to get by the best they can. Typically only the more hardy, utilitarian, or military-focused droids are found out in the Rim, where life among the stars can often be nasty, brutish, and short.

CYBOT GALACTICA K-9 SERIES HUNTING DROID [RIVAL]

On the wilder worlds in the Outer Rim, many sentients still stalk the wild beasts of their native lands as their ancestors have done for millennia. While much of this activity, especially on the more primitive worlds, is largely done to put food on the table, there are those hardy individuals for whom it is more a sport and less a necessity. Big-game hunting is big business in the Outer Rim, whether for exotic pets, firs, trophies, rare delicacies, or new chemical compounds and other components valuable to corporations. The men and women who spend their time stalking these creatures often travel with an animal or droid companion.

To aid hunters, Cybot Galactica sells the K-9 series hunting-and-tracking droid. Large, stoutly constructed droids roughly the size of a krayt-dragon hatchling, they have a distinctly canine appearance with their long bodies, wedge-shaped heads, and powerful tails. They are equipped with top-of-the-line sensors that allow them to hear frequencies well outside the ranges of most sentients as well as to see in the dark, perceive thermal emissions, and see over long distances. They are also one of the few droids equipped with advanced olfactory sensors, allowing the K-9 series to track by scent. They have crushing jaws full of sharp teeth, and their feet are equipped with retractable claws to help them take down their prey.

The K-9 series droids are also quite powerful, agile, and cunning, capable of leading other droids or hunting animals in packs. While they are intelligent, their programming and personalities are so focused that they tend to speak, when they speak at all, in clipped sentences punctuated with animal sounds and machine noises.

BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
2	3	1	3	1	1

SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE
5	9	0 / 0

Skills: Brawl 3, Perception 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3.
Talents: Hunter 2 (adds ■■ to all skill checks when interacting with wild beasts and animals, including combat checks. This character adds +20 to all Critical Injury rolls against animals).
Abilities: Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive indefinitely underwater or in vacuum. Immune to poisons and toxins).
Equipment: Teeth and claws (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 5; Range Engaged; Pierce 1), Built-in Fabritech "Hound" sensor suite (allows the droid to see in dim and dark conditions and to hear sounds far above and below a human's range of hearing at great distances. Add ■ to any Perception or Survival checks).

CYBOT GALACTICA/KDY ALL-TERRAIN EXPLORATION DROID [RIVAL]

The new All-Terrain Exploration Droid by Cybot Galactica is designed to assist in the exploration and surveying of newly discovered planets. Hailed as one of the most adaptable and competent surveying droids released in recent years, the AT-ED is set to revolutionize the field of planetary exploration. The AT-ED is a nonhumanoid, Class 2 droid built to operate in the harshest, most inhospitable environments. The AT-ED appears at first glance to be a two-and-a-half meter tall version of Kuat's AT-PT Assault Walker. A long, lightly armored trapezoidal chassis perches atop a pair of reverse-articulated legs with broad, round feet and three grasping toes each. Thanks to their drivetrain layout and the precision with which they are engineered, these droids have exceptional balance and are quite adept at traversing rough and broken ground.

The chassis is crowded with sensors, photoreceptors, microphones, and antennae. Mounted to the left side of the chassis is a powerful, long-range light that can zoom or flood its beam and can project light in the visible, infrared, and ultraviolet spectra, and the ride side mounts a blaster for defense.

A full array of audio and visual sensors feed information into the droid's computer while the numerous scientific instruments and topographic-surveying tools monitor and sample air, soil, water, radiation, and dozens of other variables while making detailed three-dimensional maps of the surrounding countryside. They can even coordinate with orbiting ships, sending and receiving telemetry to develop a thorough picture of a newly discovered world and what it has to offer. AT-EDs are expensive to purchase and maintain, and their numerous complex systems need significant attention to keep running. Despite these limitations and their strange, standoffish personalities, AT-EDs are very popular in the Outer Rim.

BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
1	3	1	3	1	1

SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE
4	15	0 / 0

Skills: Coordination 2, Perception 3, Ranged (Heavy) 1, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Outdoorsman 2 (remove ■ ■ from checks to move through terrain or manage environmental effects. Decrease overland travel time by half).

Abilities: Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive indefinitely underwater or in vacuum. Immune to poisons and toxins).

Equipment: Forward-mounted blaster (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun Setting). Fabritech "Surveyor" mapping-and-surveying suite (can create maps of terrain features within ten kilometers, transmit information to ships in orbit, scan through up to fifty meters of earth or rock, and analyze environment for any dangerous conditions. In addition, add □ □ to all Perception and Vigilance checks made by the droid).

TABLE 2-5: DROIDS

Droid Type	Price	Rarity
K-9 Series Hunting Droid	7,500	6
CG/KDY AT-ED	8,900	5
JC Series Pilot Droid	15,000	7
Exchequer Droid	10,000	5
Scout Collector	6,000	6
Scout Surveyor	2,500	6

INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATON JC SERIES PILOT DROID [RIVAL]

Pilot droids have been a common sight throughout the galaxy for millennia. They are produced in a variety of styles, from the diminutive repulsor-driven RX series to the lanky, skeletal cyclopes of the FEG series, and range from simple automated pilots following preprogrammed routes to highly talented droids capable of flying a snubfighter against Imperial Navy pilots.

The JC series produced by Industrial Automaton takes all of these qualities and turns them on their head. A bipedal, humanoid descendant of the well-respected V-series pilot droids, with which the JC series shares much of its internal systems architecture, these new-style pilot droids are unlike any previously seen on the market. They are brash, aggressive, headstrong droids programmed to be highly competitive in all matters to do with flying starships and atmospheric craft. Whereas a typical pilot droid speaks in a calming baritone and has a steady demeanor, JC-series droids speak in a quick, strong feminine voice full of confidence and swagger.

They were designed initially to act as test pilots and were marketed to shipbuilding and military-contracting concerns such as Incom and KDY. Quite intelligent for a nonacademic droid, the JC series is equipped with powerful and versatile piloting software, a datalink that allows them to connect directly to a ship's internal systems, and upgraded servos, circuits, and myomer-synthetic musculature to make them incredibly agile. While they are not built with direct combat in mind, they are equipped with a pop-up blaster pistol concealed in their right forearm along with the programming to use them, giving these droids some self-defense capabilities. Most of the JC series are still in service with their original buyers, flying small- and medium-sized prototype spacecraft to the limits of their construction and often paying for it with their lives. Those few that found their way into general civilian hands, especially in the Outer Rim, have found their share of work with traders, smugglers, explorers, and other individuals who tend to live exciting and dangerous lives and might need the services of a talented copilot.



Skills: Cool 2, Piloting (Planetary) 2, Piloting (Space) 2, Ranged (Light) 1.
Talents: Full Throttle (may make a **Hard [◆ ◆ ◆] Piloting check** to increase top speed of vehicle by 1 for one round).
Abilities: Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive indefinitely underwater or in vacuum. Immune to poisons and toxins).
Equipment: Light pop-up blaster (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Range [Short]; Critical 4; Stun Setting).

MERENDATA KLC SERIES EXCHEQUER DROID [RIVAL]

MerenData's KLC Series Exchequer Droid is marketed throughout the galaxy as "The Merchant's Best Friend." These droids are bipedal, humanoid automata similar in stature with sleek lines and nonthreatening facial features designed to put organic users at ease. They are heavily marketed to merchants, bankers, and other powerful entrepreneurs. To this end, KLC Series Exchequers are equipped with a clever and quick-thinking brain optimized for mathematics, negotiations, and market tracking. Their voice synthesizers are calibrated to be smooth and melodious, if perhaps a bit quick, and their pleasing demeanor and handsome design make them some of the more pleasant droids to work with.

The real selling point of these droids is their powerful "Mercantiler" market-tracking computer system. The Mercantiler computer is programmed with a constantly updating database that tracks the variations in major currency conversions in the galaxy, along with an exhaustive price-and-value list of nearly every commodity bought, sold, or traded. This computer also has a constant holonet connection that monitors the major stock markets in the galaxy, keeping the droid continually updated on the latest financial news and information. All this makes the Exchequers capable merchants in their own right.



Skills: Charm 2, Computers 2, Cool 2, Negotiation 2.
Talents: Wheel and Deal 2 (when selling goods legally, gain 20% more credits).**Abilities:** Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive indefinitely underwater or in vacuum. Immune to poisons and toxins).

Equipment: Mercantile computer with holonet connection (add ■ to all Negotiation checks while in the Outer Rim and ■ ■ to Negotiation checks while in the Core).

SOROSUUB CORPORATION 87-RM SCOUT COLLECTOR AND WANDERER SCOUT SURVEYOR [RIVAL]

The 87-RM Scout Collector and Wanderer Scout Surveyor are companion droid units designed to work together in concert. Produced by SoroSuub after the original manufacturer (Serv-O-Droid, Inc.) went out of business, the 87-RM is an independent droid unit designed to aid frontier biologists and botanists in locating and capturing new and exotic biological specimens.

The 87-RM resembles a large (2.5 meters high) box, hovering off the ground on repulsorlifts. This boxy form is necessary; the 87-RM's guts contain a cryogenic cubical storage container large enough to hold—and flash-freeze into cryogenic hibernation—a Tatooine dewback. The 87-RM grabs stunned specimens with its heavy-lifting servo-arms and places them inside the container for freezing and transport.

The Wanderer Scout Surveyor is a slightly smaller (roughly human sized) droid with a spherical body and up to eight spidery legs. Their design allows for remarkable speed and agility, enabling them to track targets and incapacitate them with a powerful stun blaster. Once unconscious, the 87-RM swoops in to gather the specimen. A single 87-RM usually carries one to three Wanderers, and the droids can work in concert to herd and track down their prey.

87-RM SCOUT COLLECTOR

BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
4	1	2	1	1	1

SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE
8	20	1 | 1

Skills: Knowledge (Xenology) 4, Perception 3.
Talents: None.
Abilities: Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive indefinitely underwater or in vacuum. Immune to poisons and toxins), Silhouette 3, Hoverer (floats up to several meters in the air and may move through difficult terrain without spending additional maneuvers).
Equipment: Grapple arms (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Ensnare 3), cryostorage bay.

WANDERER SCOUT SURVEYOR

BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
2	4	1	1	1	1

SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE
3	10	0 | 0

Skills: Perception 3, Ranged (Light) 1, Stealth 2, Survival 3.
Talents: Hunter 1 (adds ■ to all skill checks when interacting with wild beasts and animals, including combat checks. This character adds +20 to all Critical Injury rolls against animals), Swift (does not suffer usual penalties for moving through difficult terrain).
Abilities: Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive indefinitely underwater or in vacuum. Immune to poisons and toxins).
Equipment: Stun blaster (Ranged [Light]; Damage 8; Critical –; Range [Short]; Disorient 3, Stun Damage).



STARSHIPS AND VEHICLES

In the Outer Rim, a spacer's ship is his livelihood. It's his passage off of his planet, the headquarters of his business, and quite often his only home. Such beings live and die by their ships. They treat them like loyal pets, like families, like lovers, often caring more for their ships than they do for other sentients. They also live and die by their vehicles, and it is a rare spacer who doesn't appreciate a finely made speeder bike or airspeeder.

In the Outer Rim territories, versatile, modifiable, and affordable general-use vessels and vehicles are the most popular. With as transient a population as lives on the frontier of the galaxy and the numerous careers an individual might pursue in his lifetime, a large investment like a ship or a landspeeder must be able to adapt right along with him. That said, there are more than a few popular purpose-built ships in the Rim as well.

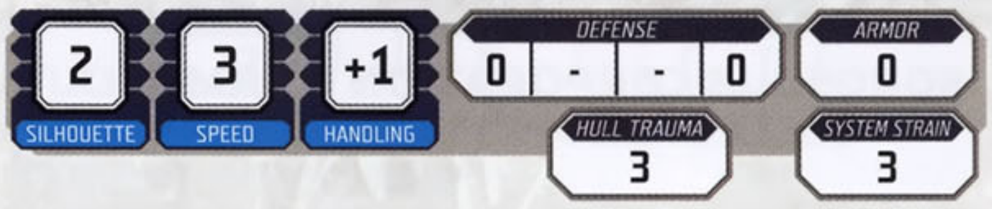
The following section presents a number of new ships and vehicles appropriate for use by those who pursue the Explorer career and its specializations. There are freighters, gunboats, exploration ships, workaday speeder bikes, and blisteringly fast swoops within, each one a possible key to wealth, fame, glory, and adventure.

LANDSPEEDERS

Landspeeders (or more specifically, speeder bikes and swoops) are vital to an explorer's work. They're easy to transport and can navigate almost any terrain.

ARATECH 57-D SPEEDER BIKE

Designed with scouting and exploration in mind, the 57-D is a rugged, medium-frame speeder bike built to withstand rough handling and hard work. It has a reinforced frame that not only improves its strength and carrying capacity but also its handling; a stiffened frame improves maneuverability. The control layout is simple and easy to read, with only a few gauges and indicator lights to distract the rider. While it resembles its more martial cousins, the 57-D is fitted with a front and rear fairing that covers the repulsor engine and most of the bike's internals, protects the rider from wind and some inclement weather, and provides ample storage by means of built-in panniers and a luggage rack with tie-down points. It lacks the military sensor package and the mounted blaster of other bikes of its class, and is instead fitted with a simple ground-following radar, inertial-mapping system, collision-warning system, and a short-range comlink.



Vehicle Type/Model: Speeder Bike/57-D.
Manufacturer: Aratech Repulsor Company.
Maximum Altitude: 20 meters.
Crew: One pilot.
Encumbrance Capacity: 10.
Passenger Capacity: 1.
Cost/Rarity: 2,800 credits/4.
Customization Hard Points: 3.
Weapons: None.

KV SWOOP

Perhaps the most common personal transport vehicle in the Outer Rim, the ubiquitous KV by Kuat Vehicles is the purest expression of the swoop concept available today. Spartan even by swoop standards, the KV is based around a Kuat Drive Yards Bansidhe ion drive. Aside from the powerful ion drive, the requisite backup repulsor system, and the simple controls, there is little to the KV aside from a reclining saddle. KV riders sit at the very rear of the craft, slightly reclined in a form-fitting full-backed seat that hugs the rider to keep him well seated during maneuvering. The hand controls are set close to the rider with intuitive switch gears that control most of the KV's rudimentary engine-management systems, and the foot controls are forward of the rider, which presents an even greater sense of reclining in a chair when astride the vehicle. KV swoops have no weapons and no capacity to add them. Their simple electrical systems are totally consumed with operating the engine, flight controls, and control surfaces to keep the KV running and the pilot alive.



Vehicle Type/Model: Swoop/KV.
Manufacturer: Kuat Vehicles.
Maximum Altitude: 50 meters.
Crew: One pilot.
Encumbrance Capacity: 3.
Passenger Capacity: None.
Cost/Rarity: 4,800 credits/5.
Customization Hard Points: 0.
Weapons: None.



ZEPHYR-G SWOOP

First produced by Mobquet in the decades leading up to the Clone Wars, the Zephyr-G is a relative oddity among swoops. Unlike most other swoops, the Zephyr-G was built for endurance rather than raw speed. While it was initially designed for racing, it was specialized for endurance racing in harsh conditions, where survivability and maneuverability are more important than straight-line speed. The Zephyr-G was built to last, with a sturdy frame and an engine designed to work hard for long periods of time in harsh conditions. In their stock configurations, they are equipped with special filters to keep sand and debris out of the engine and control surfaces, protective scuff plates that cover important equipment that is closest to the ground, and a number of other features to increase durability and efficiency. A surprisingly positive side effect of the Zephyr-G's construction is that all of the equipment and design elements that go into making it a great endurance racer also make it a phenomenal and rugged personal transport among the wilder worlds of the Outer Rim.

SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEFENSE	ARMOR	HULL TRAUMA	SYSTEM STRAIN
2	2	0	0 - - 0	0	4	7

Vehicle Type/Model: Swoop/Zephyr-G.
Manufacturer: Mobquet Swoops and Speeders.
Maximum Altitude: 6 meters.
Crew: One pilot.
Encumbrance Capacity: 4.
Passenger Capacity: 1.
Cost/Rarity: 5,700 credits/4.
Customization Hard Points: 2.
Weapons: None.

STARFIGHTERS AND PATROL BOATS

Most explorers have little use for starfighters. However, some of the smallest scout ships do technically qualify as patrol boats. Generally, these tend to be small ships for one or two people or larger, heavily armed vessels.

INCOM A-24 SLEUTH-CLASS SCOUT SHIP

Incom's A-24 Sleuth-class scout ship is a light, one-person reconnaissance ship built for stealth and speed. Slightly larger than a heavy starfighter, the Sleuth is a small, elegant craft. Long and narrow, the ship has a distinct wasp-waisted silhouette with an angular, forward command deck/cockpit, a narrow midships section mounting a small pair of canards that support the ship's sensor and communications array, and a broad aft section that flares out in a flat triangular shape that houses the engines, winglets, stabilizers, and weapons. The command deck/cockpit section can be charitably described as intimate. The cramped confines of the pilot's station are offset by the panoramic sheets of transparisteel that enclose the cockpit. These thick panes are photosensitive and grant the pilot a nearly unobstructed view of his surroundings. Aft of the pilot's chair, there is a machine closet that can house an astromech droid if so desired.

For scouting and reconnaissance, the Sleuth is equipped with a powerful multirole sensor suite produced by Fabritech for Incom. Tuned for long-range scouting, these sensors use optical and electronic enhancers, as well as active and passive systems like dedicated energy receptors, full-spectrum transceivers, and life-form scanners, to give the scout pilot a comprehensive view of his surroundings. The ship's other systems include a trio of Incom's high-output 804.d Starslinger ion drives, two Taim & Bak IX4 linked laser cannons, and a dependable hyperdrive and navicomputer for long scouting missions. While there are newer scout ships on the market, the A-24 remains popular for its speed and ease of use.

SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEFENSE	ARMOR	HULL TRAUMA	SYSTEM STRAIN
3	4	+1	1 - - 0	2	10	10

Hull Type/Class: Patrol Boat/Sleuth.
Manufacturer: Incom Corporation.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 1, Backup: Class 9.

Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Medium.
Ship's Complement: One pilot.
Encumbrance Capacity: 20.
Passenger Capacity: 1.
Comsumables: Three months.
Cost/Rarity: 45,000 credits/6.
Customization Hard Points: 3.
Weapons: Forward-mounted light laser cannons (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).

INCOM A-36 PATHFINDER-CLASS FORCE RECONNAISSANCE VESSEL

Essentially an enhanced version of Incom's successful A-24 Sleuth-class scout vessel, the A-36 is designed for spacers who prefer direct action as opposed to skulking about and watching from afar. Using a batch of unsold A-24 hulls as a starting point, Incom stretched the hulls and enlarged the command deck, providing just enough space for a crew of four to operate the ship.

Along with increasing its size and crew capacity, Incom stripped most of the reconnaissance sensor suite out of the ships, replacing it with a long-range pinpoint sensor array, a suite of more powerful weapons, and a sophisticated tracking/targeting/fire control computer. Extra armor was added to sensitive areas, the keels were strengthened, more powerful engines were installed, and a number of other systems were upgraded, hardened, and recalibrated to turn the ship from a passive scouting vessel to a fast, hard-hitting force recon ship.

The Pathfinder-class force reconnaissance ships retain the graceful, wasp-waisted silhouette of their A-24 predecessor. The command deck, while noticeably larger now, is still wrapped in photosensitive transparisteel sheets that give the crew a commanding view of their surroundings. Despite their upgrades and lengthening, Pathfinders blend in easily with their smaller, meeker A-24 cousins, a fact that organizations who keep both ships in their inventory use to great effect.

Aside from the obvious changes to the ship's length and bulk, the most notable item about the Pathfinder class is the sheer number of weapon systems that Incom managed to mount to them. In addition to the Taim & Bak laser cannons inherited from the original A-24, the A-36 carries a dorsal turret-mounted light repeating ion cannon on the midships section, giving it full command of the area around the vessel. Additionally, a concussion missile launcher is mounted along the starboard side of the command deck. Mated to a specially calibrated Anq 3.6 tracking computer with an upgraded "Longshot" fire-control system, the weapons of the Pathfinder class give it a heavy, long-range punch well out of scale with its size. While not particularly common, Pathfinder-class ships are gaining a following in the Outer Rim, where they are used as patrol craft, interdictors, gunboats, and long-range scouting vessels.

SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEFENSE	ARMOR	HULL TRAUMA	SYSTEM STRAIN
4	4	0	1 - - 1	3	16	16

Hull Type/Class: Patrol Boat/Pathfinder.
Manufacturer: Incom Corporation.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: Class 12.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Medium.
Ship's Complement: One pilot, one copilot, one sensor operator, one gunner.
Encumbrance Capacity: 40.
Passenger Capacity: 4.
Comsumables: Nine months.
Cost/Rarity: 135,000 credits/7.
Customization Hard Points: 2.
Weapons: Forward-mounted light laser cannons (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).

Dorsal turret-mounted light ion cannon (Fire Arc All; Damage 8; Critical 4; Range [Close]; Ion).

Forward-mounted concussion missile launcher (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Short]; Breach 4, Blast 4, Guided 3, Limited Ammo 8).

ANQ 3.6 TRACKING COMPUTER

The Anq 3.6 is a computer/fire control system that allows the Pathfinder's sensor operator to coordinate fire amongst all ship weapons. The sensor operator must designate one target and make an **Average (◆ ◆) Computers check**. If he succeeds, all combat checks made by ship weapons against his designated target upgrade the ability of their check once. If he has ✲ ✲ ✲ or ⊕ on his check, he may designate an additional target.

LORONAR E-9 EXPLORER-CLASS ARMED LONG-RANGE SCOUT VESSEL

Loronar Corporation is an old, respected, and well-diversified corporation based in the Meridian Sector. Known primarily for their mining interests, they are relative newcomers to the shipbuilding industry. One of their first forays into shipbuilding came at the end of the Clone Wars with the introduction of the E-9 unarmed light freighter.

It was, to put it mildly, a colossal failure upon delivery. The ship suffered not from production or quality failures (in fact it was an excellent small freighter) but from political turmoil and intense competition from Corellian Engineering's already entrenched and wildly popular YT series of light freighters.

After a few years of dismal sales, the E-9 was discontinued as a light freighter, redesigned, and rereleased as a long-range armed scouting vessel. Most of the ship's systems remained the same, as did its swooping, organic-looking hull, but the sensors, flight control, and computer systems were all upgraded and optimized for reconnaissance and scouting. Cargo capacity was reduced significantly to make way for larger engines and a more powerful power generator, and a pair of turret-mounted laser cannons were added for defense. After a fair amount of legal wrangling with the newly ascendant Empire, which looked askance at civilian shipbuilders mounting weapons to their products, the rebadged E-9 Explorer-class ships were introduced just as the Empire solidified its control over the galaxy.

Some of the larger ships in their class, the Explorer-class ships are built for endurance and reliability. The hull is low and long, with soft, curved lines and a silhouette reminiscent of a sea creature. It has a medium-sized cargo hold equipped with a convenient load-management and inventory computer that assists in loading, unloading, and tracking cargo. It also boasts a quartet of small but comfortable passenger berths, a common-crew berthing area, and a common galley/head. The command deck is directly forward and seats three of the four-man crew: the pilot, copilot, and engineer. The loadmaster's station is in the cargo hold.

Despite their age, Explorer-class ships have a considerably modern layout, making accessing the various compartments and holds easy and intuitive. With their powerful scouting sensor arrays, reliable engines and flight-control computers, and onboard weapon systems, the Explorer-class ships are perfectly suited for long-range scouting, exploration, and even light trade.

ENGINEERING ACCESS

One of the Explorer's more intelligent design features is the network of sub-deck access passages. Granting easy access to nearly any internal system on the ship, the cramped passages allow the engineer to respond quickly to problems. Anyone working on the internal systems of the E-9 Explorer-class vessels, such as the power system, hyperdrive, computers, sensors, etcetera, gains ■ to any Mechanics or Computers skill checks thanks to the ease of reaching systems that are typically hidden behind bulkheads and sealed beneath deck plates.



Hull Type/Class: Patrol Boat/Explorer.
Manufacturer: Loronar Corporation.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 1, Backup: Class 12.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Medium.
Ship's Complement: One pilot, one copilot, one engineer, and one loadmaster.
Encumbrance Capacity: 60.
Passenger Capacity: 4.
Comsumables: Six months.
Cost/Rarity: 120,000 credits/6.
Customization Hard Points: 4.
Weapons: One dorsal and one ventral turret-mounted medium laser cannon (Fire Arc All; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).

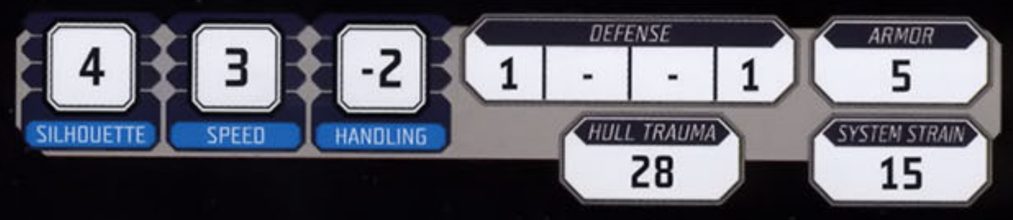
FREIGHTERS AND TRANSPORTS

Freighters are valuable vessels for explorers, able to facilitate trade or haul entire expeditions in their holds.

GHTROC 720 LIGHT FREIGHTER

An ambitious but ultimately failed attempt to compete with CEC's YT-series light freighters, the 720 class was produced by the now defunct Ghtroc Industries. Ghtroc was well respected as a builder of high-quality freighters. The 720 class was seen by Ghtroc's designers as a way to corner the light freighter market in the Outer Rim and unseat the more successful offerings from its competitors. The ship carries a crew of two with accommodations for ten passengers. Two secure cargo holds take up the majority of the port and starboard midships space, with crew and passenger berthing forward abaft the extended bridge and command deck. The ship's reactor and engineering spaces are located amidships beneath a panoramic observation dome, a strange luxury in a freighter. The matched banks of GI/80.b Overthruster ion engines are housed in heavily armored nacelles in the bows of the ship, flanking the bridge as opposed to being mounted in the ship's stern. Combined with the angled aft escape-pod launchers, the freighter has a rather testudine appearance.

Although heavily armored, the 720 class is lightly armed. Equipped with a single turret-mounted twin light laser cannon, the weak armament is considered the most glaring deficiency in an otherwise well-constructed ship. Like most light freighters, the 720 class was designed with modification in mind. Indeed, most in operation today bear little resemblance to the ships that came off the assembly line at the Ghtroc shipyards. Although never as popular as their parent company had hoped, these ships have a small but passionate following among free traders and smugglers in the Outer Rim.



Hull Type/Class: Freighter/720.
Manufacturer: Ghtroc Industries.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: Class 15.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Medium.
Ship's Complement: One pilot, one copilot.
Encumbrance Capacity: 200.
Passenger Capacity: 10.
Comsumables: Two months.
Cost/Rarity: 112,000 credits/8.
Customization Hard Points: 4.
Weapons: Dorsal turret-mounted twin light laser cannon (Fire Arc All; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).



XIYTIAR-CLASS HEAVY TRANSPORT

Known primarily as a manufacturer of military starships and fighters, their most famous being the titanic Bulwark I-class heavy warships, TransGalMeg also produces a line of well-made and well-respected unarmed transport vessels. Perhaps the most popular of this small line of transports is the massive, lumbering Xiytiar-class heavy transport. Relatively new and uncommon, the Xiytiar-class ships are sturdy, cavernous cargo haulers equipped with the very latest in navigation, hyperdrive, and load-management systems.

Roughly the same size as Mobquet's Mb-C1 class of heavy transports, these haulers are among the quickest ships of their type both in realspace and hyperspace. Due to their size, high crew requirements, and the cost of maintaining these mammoth vessels, the Xiytiar-class ships are not particularly well suited for small private commercial concerns or smuggling operations. They are, however, gaining acceptance among larger, more established transport and trade companies that can absorb their operating costs and use their speed and hauling capacity to their fullest extent.

The ship itself is shaped rather like a piece of sporting equipment, with a large, bulbous forward section connected to the aft engine and engineering section by a thin, cylindrical midships section. The forward section houses the command deck, the crew quarters, a few passenger berths, and the cargo holds. The holds are efficiently and intelligently laid out and are managed by a sophisticated lading system that tracks and inventories cargoes.

The midships section is largely machine spaces, sensor arrays, kilometers of cable, and a cramped walkway connecting the forward and aft sections. The engine and engineering section contains the majority of the power-generation and drive systems, along with the main computer bus and the shield generators. While these ships are highly mission focused with not much room for aftermarket modifications, particularly ingenious operators can squeeze a few weapons into the hull for defensive purposes or lay a little more armor over the midships section should they feel the need.



Hull Type/Class: Transport/Xiytiar.
Manufacturer: TransGalMeg Industries.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 3, Backup: Class 16.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Short.
Ship's Complement: One pilot, one copilot, one engineer, one loadmaster, and six technicians.
Encumbrance Capacity: 2,000.
Passenger Capacity: 12.
Comsumables: Six months.
Cost/Rarity: 200,000 credits/5.
Customization Hard Points: 4.
Weapons: None.

YG-4210 LIGHT FREIGHTER



Among the oldest ships still plying the hyperspace lanes, Corellian Engineering Corporation's YG-4210 is a throwback to another generation of ship design. Originally built as a deep-space exploration vessel more than two centuries ago, these ships were quite well regarded in their time. Equipped with efficient engines, strong shields, long-range sensors, automated maintenance and resource-recycling systems, and deep cargo holds to carry provisions, the YG-4210 series ships could stay operational in deep space for months or even years at a time without refit or resupply. In the years since they first came on the market, these stalwart old ships have been supplanted by better, more modern, and more powerful ships. Most of those that weren't lost in space or to simple fatigue were scrapped and their hulls and systems recycled for their base materials.

A few survived, however, passing from owner to owner, until their original scouting role gave way to that of a humble light freighter. Now, those few YG-4210s still active serve small-time traders and smugglers in the Outer Rim. Perfect for the newly formed or budget-minded mercantile concern, these ships are still quite useful after all these generations in space, and many can even keep up with the latest offerings from CEC, Incom, and TransGalMeg.

The YG-4210 is, like all of the ancient YG-series ships, unlike anything Corellian Engineering has on the market today. It has a flat, single-decked, spade-shaped hull with a dorsally mounted command deck covered by an armored blister canopy. It has three subspace engines located in the trefoil-shaped engineering section that is connected to the main hull by a small passage. Crew and passenger facilities are in the main hull along with the cargo hold, which can be loaded either from a ventral loading ramp or by crane through dorsally mounted port and starboard loading hatches.

Like most ships operating in the Outer Rim, especially those as old as the antique YG-series ships, they bear only a passing resemblance to the ships that first flew off the slips all those decades ago. Over the course of their lifespans, YG-4210 freighters have passed through scores of owners, each one modifying the ship to his tastes and needs. There is no such thing as a stock YG-4210 anymore. If there is a lonesome, unsold, and unmodified YG-4210 moldering away in some forgotten shipyard or hangar bay, it would fetch quite a price from those who know quality ships when they see them.

Hull Type/Class: Freighter/YG-4210.
Manufacturer: Corellian Engineering Corporation.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 3, Backup: Class 13.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Medium.
Ship's Complement: One pilot, one copilot.
Encumbrance Capacity: 120.
Passenger Capacity: 12.
Comsumables: One year.
Cost/Rarity: 85,000 credits/7.
Customization Hard Points: 4.
Weapons: Dorsal-mounted twin light laser cannon (Fire Arc All; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).

YT-1000 LIGHT FREIGHTER

The third ship of Corellian Engineering's flagship YT class of modular light freighters, the YT-1000 series was the first of the YT-series ships to gain any popularity in the galaxy. A vast improvement over the awkward YT-450a and the undistinguished YT-700, the YT-1000 set the standard to which all subsequent YT-class ships would be held. The first of CEC's ships to be built around the now common Corellian saucer-shaped deck plan, the YT-1000 series possesses many of the features for which CEC is so famous and respected today.

Quicker in its stock configuration and smaller by a few meters than subsequent YT-series ships, these vessels were an instant sensation upon their release. First made available in the waning years of the Old Republic before the outbreak of the Clone Wars, YT-1000s offered a quick, efficient, versatile freighter with a large cargo capacity at a very respectable price. These ships were sold by the thousands, and they served as couriers, light freighters, VIP shuttles, and in countless other roles all across the galaxy. They remained popular even after the introduction of the improved YT-1100 and YT-1200 series and are still in demand today, especially among individuals in the Outer Rim who are just starting out life in the intergalactic trade industry.

YT-1000-series light freighters have the iconic saucer hull that has come to be a trademark of Corellian Engineering's ship-manufacturing arm. Its two-seat cockpit is located dorsally along the forward cen-



ter line of the ship and is flanked by two cargo-loading mandibles. The main hull spars, corridors, and escape pods are located amidships, and two powerful ion engines dominate the aft section. They were equipped with turret-mounted laser cannons in the dorsal weapons mount from the factory, but as with all CEC ships, the weapons are easily upgraded for more powerful or accurate models.

The crew and passenger berths, while relatively spartan, are comfortable, and the ships are equipped with decent galley, refresher, and head facilities. As with subsequent YT-series ships, the cargo hold is large and modular and can be easily modified to carry any size or shape of cargo that will fit in the ship. Cargo and passengers are loaded from a ventral ramp, and a small hatch abaft the command deck gives access to the ship's dorsal surface.

While the YT-1000s have waned in popularity, especially after the introduction of the YT-1300-series freighters, they still remain in service throughout the Outer Rim and still fetch a respectable price when available for sale.



Hull Type/Class: Freighter/YT-1000.
Manufacturer: Corellian Engineering Corporation.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 3, Backup: Class 16.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Short.
Ship's Complement: One pilot, one copilot/engineer.
Encumbrance Capacity: 150.
Passenger Capacity: 4.
Comsumables: Two months.
Cost/Rarity: 75,000 credits/5.
Customization Hard Points: 5.
Weapons: Dorsal turret-mounted twin light laser cannon (Fire Arc All; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).

YV-560 LIGHT FREIGHTER

The spiritual successor to CEC's ancient YG series, the new YV-560 series is a modern take on the old idea of medium-sized long-range exploration ships. Designed with planetary exploration in mind, the YV-560 is geared toward providing a stable and reliable platform from which explorers, scholars, and archaeologists can base their remote research. While officially classified as a freighter, they were essentially purposely built to carry small and delicate cargoes, samples, and artifacts of the kind unearthed by scientists and scholars.

The cargo holds aboard the YV-560 series are smaller than those found on other CEC ships. They are compartmentalized and distributed around the ship to provide balance and structural reinforcement to the hull. Each one is isolated from the others and from the ship's general atmosphere, possessing individual atmosphere processors and heating and cooling systems. They are also airtight, lockable, and can be completely sealed and walled off behind bulkheads in case of an emergency.

The vessels themselves have all the hallmarks of CEC's ship-architecture philosophy. Similar in size and shape to the venerable YT-1000, the YV-560 series has the iconic saucer-shaped hull possessed by most of CEC's light freighters. While they are lightly armed and armored, they have sturdy hulls and can withstand a surprising amount of punishment. The two-position command pod is centrally mounted on the dorsal side of the vessel, and two powerful sensor booms extend forward from the hull, for an appearance slightly reminiscent of the YT-1300's loading mandibles. The interior of the ship is laid out in a similar fashion to other CEC-series ships, with good accommodations for passengers and crew and comfortable, if perhaps a touch limited, common areas, galleys, and heads.

Along with its common monitoring systems, the ship contains a powerful scientific computer designed to aid explorers in scientific pursuits, with a main terminal in the common area and smaller remote terminals in each passenger berth. Along with its regular navigation sensors, the YV-560 is also equipped with a powerful, high-definition, precision planetary-scanning array that allows it to survey a new planet from orbit. While they have only been on the market for a few years, the YV-560s have lived up to their advertising and more than one scientific expedition is based out of these new ships.

SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEFENSE	ARMOR
4	3	0	1 - - 1	3

HULL TRAUMA	SYSTEM STRAIN
20	20

Hull Type/Class: Freighter/YV-560.
Manufacturer: Corellian Engineering Corporation.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: Class 15.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Long.
Ship's Complement: One pilot, one copilot/engineer.
Encumbrance Capacity: 80.
Passenger Capacity: 5.
Comsumables: Eight months.
Cost/Rarity: 120,000 credits/7.
Customization Hard Points: 4.
Weapons: Dorsal-mounted twin medium laser cannon (Fire Arc All; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).



CAPITAL SHIPS

Most capital ships are unsuited for exploration, trading endurance and long-range sensors for armements and armor. However, the galaxy has seen some examples of warships designed for venturing alone into undiscovered reaches of the galaxy. While they cannot stand against other, similarly sized warships, they are more than capable of protecting any expedition they accompany against most hostiles they may encounter.

XANTER-CLASS DEEP-SPACE EXPLORATION FRIGATE

The Xanter-class deep-space exploration frigate is an ancient vessel. Created by Rendilli Stardrives almost five hundred years ago to capitalize on one of the many Outer Rim expansion and colonization drives, the Xanter trades the weaponry of other, similar-sized vessels for unparalleled endurance.

The ship can last for years without resupply, and every aspect of living space is designed with long-term habitation in mind. The Xanter's crew quarters are spacious and well appointed, each crew member has his own berth to provide guaranteed privacy and personal space. The galley can create a wide variety of passable and varied food, and the recreational facilities provide a number of enjoyable amusements. There is even a hydroponic garden that doubles as an observation dome, providing fresh food and oxygen while also giving the crew a place to relax amongst vegetation and the vastness of space.

However, the Xanter is still a warship and exploration vessel. Emergency bulkheads can seal off most parts of the ship, and even the observation dome has a retractable cover of hardened durasteel. The YDFed ion drives and hyperdrive systems have triple redundancies built in, almost guaranteeing that the ship cannot be stranded in wild space. Finally, the Xanter mounts turbolasers, ion cannons, and heavy laser cannons for starfighter and capital-ship defense.

Although the Xanter is no longer produced, it is still possible to find these ships amongst some corporations and expeditions in the Outer Rim. Tough, durable, and reliable ships such as these will always have a place in exploration.

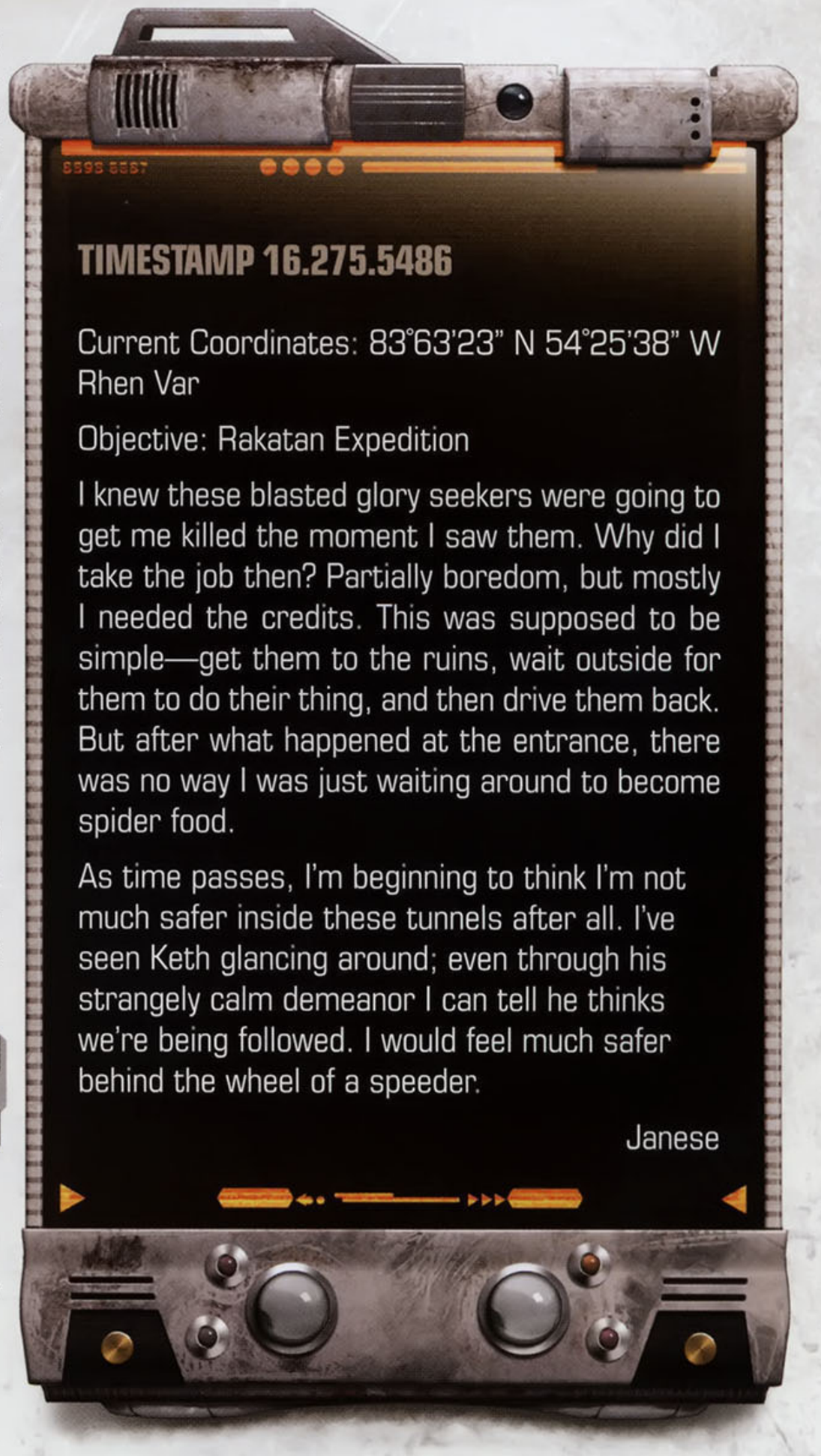
SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEFENSE	ARMOR
6	1	-2	2 / 2 / 2 / 2	6

HULL TRAUMA	SYSTEM STRAIN
80	32

Hull Type/Class: Frigate/Xanter.
Manufacturer: Rendilli Stardrive.
Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 3, Backup: Class 9, Tertiary backup: Class 18.
Navicomputer: Yes.
Sensor Range: Long.
Ship's Complement: 150 officers, pilots, and crew.
Starfighter Complement: Six starfighters.
Encumbrance Capacity: 2,000, depending on configuration.
Passenger Capacity: 50 scientists and explorers.
Comsumables: Two-and-a-half years.
Cost/Rarity: 3,750,000 credits/7.
Customization Hard Points: 1.
Weapons: Two forward-, three port-, and three starboard-mounted heavy laser cannons (Fire Arc Forward *or* Port *or* Starboard; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Short]).

One port and one starboard turret-mounted twin light turbolasers (Fire Arc Forward and Port *or* Forward and Starboard; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Breach 2, Linked 1, Slow-Firing 1).

One ventral turret-mounted twin ion cannon (Fire Arc All; Damage 7; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Ion, Slow-Firing 1).





GRAND EXPEDITIONS

"He must choose his own path; no one can choose it for him."

–Leia Organa

Involving Explorer characters in games of **Edge of the Empire** provides GMs with the perfect opportunity to craft an adventure taking place in strange locales, dramatic events, and terrible foes. Adventure takes place in the course of even the most routine expeditions, and so the life of a committed Explorer is one in which exciting events are everywhere. As a consequence, players with Explorer characters will likely be foremost among those motivated to engage in the game and drive the plot forward.

This chapter examines the sorts of character personalities that indicate strong Explorers and the sometimes peculiar motives that drive them. This section should prove useful to GMs and players in the creation of Explorer characters as it discusses the context within which such beings operate in the *Star Wars* galaxy. Various ideas are presented as to why Explorers take to the stars as well as the more individual quirks and experiences typical to the lives of Big-Game Hunters, Traders, and other types of Explorers.

This chapter also contains plenty of advice for the GM about how to create encounters, scenarios, and campaigns featuring themes of exploration. This includes ideas on the content of a successful narrative as well as how to avoid some common pitfalls. A number of adventure seeds and ideas for fearsome nemeses are provided, which should give GMs the ammunition they need to come up with material for some truly epic campaigns. Advice and words of warning are offered about other issues common to running role-playing games, such as how to tailor your game to particular players and how to create memorable NPCs.

The final section provides an examination of the sorts of rewards and consequences an Explorer might expect from his expeditions. This chapter presents an overview of the people and institutions who offer rewards for new discoveries, along with advice concerning who an Explorer should (and should not) tell of an interesting find. The issue of Obligation and how an Explorer might pay it off through new discoveries is also covered, as is the delicate political balancing act often associated with sharing a valuable discovery with those who seek to profit from it.

WHO BECOMES EXPLORERS?

Explorers of all types make terrific characters to help motivate a party to undertake new adventures and blaze trails into strange new territory. By their very nature, Explorers are on a constant search for new opportunities and fresh experiences, and since such goals often provide the impetus for adventures, it is easy to see how important their involvement can be.

To other characters, particularly those with mercenary attitudes, Explorers might seem to be motivated by unusual drives. While the financial rewards of some famous expeditions have amounted to significant fortunes, it is not for money that most Explorers do what they do.

Instead, the majority of Explorers undertake their missions primarily for the feeling of having been to a new territory first or for the accolades awarded to them by those they view as peers. Explorers of this type often cultivate a degree of eccentricity. They are practical people, as at home in the cockpit as any smuggler, and only too able to take to the engineering bay with a tool kit and astromech in the event of a breakdown. However, a strong association with the early years of the Galactic Republic, when the most audacious and perilous expeditions into unknown reaches of the galaxy took place, leads some to cultivate rather anachronistic modes of dress, speech, and attitude.

IDEOLOGICALLY DRIVEN

Some politically motivated Explorers are keen to bring their own ideologies and values to far-flung civilizations, while others are desperate to escape from oppression, persecution, or the ennui that they suffer in the known galaxy. These Explorers can present a problem for populations of sentient species that they meet on their expeditions. Those who wish to evangelize a way of life or philosophical perspective can be dogmatic regarding the values they deem suitable for others. Such beings can do untold damage to a developing civilization by imposing values on them that have little relevance to their circumstances or that are fundamentally unethical or immoral. Such Explorers need not necessarily be malign or self-serving, though at various times in galactic history, followers of the dark side have taken advantage of newly found civilizations and species with grave consequences.

HUNGRY FOR PROFIT

Explorers regularly make stunning discoveries in the form of new systems, planets, and hyperroutes, and most of those who come across a primitive sentient species are careful so as not to upset their development, if at all possible. The Hyperspace Navigators Guild, while a shadow of the organization it was during the golden age of galactic exploration, still pays those Explorers well who find safe hyperspace shortcuts and habitable new worlds.

Explorers can also suffer from restless spirits; even visiting new planets may become something of a bore to them if it seems to be all they do. An Explorer who has a few new worlds under his belt may begin to desire a new challenge, such as solving a great mystery or uncovering evidence of a lost civilization on a world that was previously thought to have been comprehensively mapped.

Those Explorers who lack the urge to make bold new discoveries or who are in need of a more likely and reliable source of income tend to stay in areas of space that have already been charted. There are innumerable barren and uninteresting worlds in the galaxy, as well as asteroids beyond counting, and only a small portion of them have been given more than a cursory examination. Organizations such as the Hyperspace Navigators Guild and the Astrogation faculties of many universities do offer small rewards for any additional information about the position and features of such objects, and if an Explorer is lucky, he may even discover a source of valuable raw materials.

The classic Explorer has something of a dual nature when it comes to dealing with others. On one hand, he is great at networking, fostering relationships with a wide variety of beings upon whom he can call for expert assistance when confronting problems and challenges. On the other hand, there are also loner qualities in the greatest Explorers, who typically want to keep the actual business of undertaking their expeditions a secret in



order to assure that they are the first to reach a new destination. Most Explorers cultivate a few solid contacts with whom they resolve their day-to-day business, including the crews of their vessels, but they maintain friendly relations with a wider supporting network of helpful acquaintances. Many aspiring Explorers like to have a lifelong mission in mind and do not like to waste their time with those who are of no use to them or show no understanding of their ambitions.

CANNY, CHARISMATIC, AND RUTHLESS

Traders are a different matter. The best Traders tend to have a natural ease when it comes to making quick, if somewhat superficial, friendships. Traders tend to avoid politics when possible and are good at keeping their opinions to themselves and cultivating cosmopolitan tastes. This is all the better to win the regard, and business, of those they meet. Such Traders are not necessarily amoral by inclination. Rather it is that they tend to play a long game when it comes to judging others. As such the standard of "when on Gamorr do as the Gamorreans do" can pervade trading circles, but most Traders would rather do business with civilized beings given the opportunity. If nothing else, it is better for fostering good public relations. Many Traders cultivate ethical connections and standards of business for the sake of their own long-term reputations as much as a sincere moral code. Indeed, some of the most ruthless and unpleasant Traders, in purely personal terms, are those who manage to eschew unethical or criminal business practices. Just because a Trader keeps within the letter and spirit of the law, it does not make that person a pleasant individual.

Traders tend to develop a more technical appreciation of galactic laws and regulations than other characters. Those with quality products to sell may even approve of and support strict regulation, proud that their wares meet the required standard and keen to see inferior competitors removed from the market. However, most Traders dislike bureaucratic measures cutting into the sort of goods they can sell and the speed or bulk with which they can bring them to market. To such Traders, the freer the market is, the better it is. This is the one issue about which Traders can be reliably expected to become fiercely and loudly political.



TOUGH, RESOURCEFUL, AND SELF-RELIANT

Fringers are those who, through aptitude or necessity, have learned the skills needed to survive for long periods of time without the comforts and luxuries of civilization. While Fringers may seem uncivilized and disconnected, they are often members of tight social networks. Self-reliance is important to Fringers, but this does not mean they turn their back on all manner of society. Cultivating the right network of contacts to compensate for their relative isolation from a working infrastructure is a necessary aspect of most Fringers' day-to-day existences.

Not all Fringers were born and raised on the edges of the galaxy. Some of those who make the most of life on the frontier are the offspring of wealthy Core Worlders, the sons and daughters of well-to-do merchant families or other social elites. Not all of these people will have taken up a life on the fringes willingly; some will be members or contacts of the political class who governed during the time of the Galactic Republic and now find themselves in exile. However, some will be there as a point of honor, seeking to prove (if only to themselves) that even those born within the pampered environment of the bright and shining core still have what it takes to survive on the fringes. Those who retain their connections to people in places of high influence while developing the skills needed to forage, scavenge, and subsist on the fringes may even find themselves in high demand, facilitating the wishes of those members of the galactic elite who wish to get in touch with a more primitive way of life.

Many Fringers identify strongly as self-sufficient and resourceful and can be justifiably proud of their abilities to make good in the most unpromising of environments. With that in mind, they do cultivate strong ties to those they live alongside, and it would be a traumatic experience if they were deprived of their immediate network. Witnessing the persecution of his fellows or the destruction of his environment could provide a Fringer with a strong motive to seek justice or revenge.

SHARP-EYED MAVERICKS

Scouts have a good deal in common with Fringers. They too have to learn how to make best use of the land and survive for lengthy periods of time with little support or supply. Scouts also cultivate a set of skills tailored to conducting forays into unknown territory or following particular quarry over long distances. Where a Scout differs from a Fringer is that he does not typically exist within wilderness territory but goes there for the sake of a contract. Scouts are often employed by military forces to help advise them on local and regional knowledge or to build an accurate impression of the lay of the land.

Many Scouts live in complement to those military forces for which they perform their missions and make disciplined soldiering a sideline to their primary skill set. Others are unimpressed with the destructive aspects of military campaigns and find it hard to identify with the strict regimen of the soldiering life. Unless a general is willing to accept the presence of a maverick within his structure (with the upshot that members of the rank and file might come to resent the relative disparity in freedoms afforded to such an individual), such Scouts are unlikely to remain for a long period of time as an integral part of the force.

Not every Scout works alongside military units. Some excel in private investigation, and this would be one of the few roles a Scout could find in an urban setting. Some restrict themselves purely to space travel, blazing trails along new hyperlanes and into newly discovered areas. Other Scouts may be hired by those exploring a new frontier or undertaking a trek through the wilderness. Scouts may also work for bounty hunters. In this role, they may even perform much of the actual tracking of quarry and only hand control of the expedition over to the hunter when an opportunity arises to strike.

AT HOME IN THE FIELD AND THE LECTURE HALL

Archaeologists marry the thirst for daring adventure common to Explorers with an academic point of view and keen scientific knowledge. Such beings are keenly competitive, and the trait of pursuing notoriety rather than material gain is particularly pronounced. Many Archaeologists are motivated by nothing more than the hope that they will be noted by posterity. They wish to be lauded for the quality of their contributions to the discovery of new information pertaining to their field and would be willing to undergo significant risk or hardship to obtain such recognition.

Many Archaeologists' day-to-day activities take them nowhere near the harsh rigors of fieldwork. Some will be researchers and theorists, more at home in the library or university lecture hall than digging through strange ruins on faraway worlds. However, even dusty old academics might not be able to resist the temptation to be among those first at the scene of a major new archaeological discovery, especially if it might help confirm ideas and theories they have held close to their hearts in the course of their studies. Such individuals can make interesting characters in a roleplaying game, as they are relative fish out of water in comparison to more practically minded adventurers. Their usefulness comes from their ability to notice pertinent clues that may mitigate danger or facilitate success, and this can make up for the fact that other members of the party may be significantly more accurate with a blaster rifle.

PRACTICALLY MINDED AND SOCIABLE

Drivers may be among the most practical of the various Explorer archetypes. They have to be tough individuals with the endurance and strength of will necessary to remain alert over long, and often boring, stretches of time. Like Fringers, Drivers are often thought of as people who are happy to be alone for long periods of time with no one but themselves to rely upon, and as with Fringers, this reputation ignores the fact that Drivers often cultivate close-knit networks to help them in times of crisis. That said, only a foolhardy Driver would neglect to learn the basics of how to maintain a vehicle or the skills needed to make it through short spells of wilderness survival in the event of a breakdown.

Drivers are perhaps less comfortable with the notion of actual exploration than the other archetypes mentioned here. Many Drivers work well-established routes and expect to be able to access the loose network of friends and professionals known to them at every settlement and cantina stop along the way.

COMPETITIVE AND FEARLESS

Of all the different types who take up a life of exploration, Big-Game Hunters are the most likely to embody a spirit of competitive machismo (whether they are in fact male, female, or otherwise). They see it as the ultimate test of their own strength and resourcefulness to be able to track down and confront the most notorious predatory species that the galaxy has to offer. Hunters see themselves as engaged in a grand narrative of their own, each scar and trophy a beloved reminder of a thrilling story that they will be only too keen to retell.

Despite the fact that they seek to prove themselves personally capable of making a conquest over the forc-

es of nature, Big-Game Hunters can find themselves at the forefront of efforts to protect it. For some, this may well be a mere matter of professional interest. Hunters recognize the need for tracts of unspoiled wilderness in order to preserve the sorts of ecosystems necessary to support large apex predators. For others, concern for the natural order of things is more deep seated; they may even see their activities in taking on and killing or capturing dangerous animals as a way to commune with nature or imbue others with a sense of wonder and respect for the wild. Still others may coordinate their efforts with those of committed conservationists, seeking to control populations of certain species in order to better protect the stability of a given ecosystem.

For example, populations of rancors have been introduced to a number of planets only to have devastating consequences on native fauna, and efforts by conservationists to bring them under control or even wipe them out could necessitate close work with Big-Game Hunters.

Not all Big-Game Hunters care about such matters. Some are as cynical about nature as others are keen to protect it. These Big-Game Hunters believe that sentient species have a right to exploit nonsentient species for fun or profit as they so desire. They may even cultivate religious beliefs about the superiority of sentient species and their dominion over nature or coldhearted philosophical doctrines about the irrelevance of notions of pain or distress to life-forms that lack noticeable degrees of sentience.

TALL TALES

One point that should be kept in mind when dealing with someone who claims to be an Explorer is that it is far easier to boast of perilous journeys and exciting new discoveries than it is to actually undertake and survive an expedition of note. Burned-out old Explorers can be found in cantinas all across the galaxy, gamely propping up the bar and eagerly informing anyone who buys them a drink of the marvelous sights they saw when they plied the stars.

Most of these beings are engaged in wild embellishment of their records. This trait is particularly egregious in the case of two or more old Explorers engaged in a process of one-upmanship, each trying to think of an exploit more daring and unlikely than that just reported by the other.

Usually, such stories mostly involve some sort of escape from unexpected and dangerous celestial phenomena or an attack by a famished space slug of prodigious size and ferocity. By the skin of his teeth the Explorer managed to save his ship, only to find himself many parsecs off course, becalmed on the outskirts of a strange system containing a fascinating planet. What makes this planet so engrossing might be one or more various factors. An alien species possessed of unsurpassed beauty or cultural achievement, fields of precious raw material just waiting to be harvested, the wreck of a huge spaceship of an unknown pattern, a pristine but uninhabited city from which emanated multiple energy readings that went right off the chart, a society of strange droids, and so on.

Predictably, in the course of avoiding the earlier danger, the Explorer had become hopelessly lost, and the area of space he occupied was so strange or remote that it was all his poor navigational computer could do to bring him back to a charted area. Once back in familiar territory, the Explorer was only too keen to return to the wonders he had discovered, but subsequent circumstances conspired to prevent him from ever claiming his miraculous find.

Most listeners know to treat these tales with the cynicism they deserve. However, such lies often excite the interest of aspiring Explorers who have yet to learn that their older counterparts often embellish the impact that their own exploits had on the history of galactic exploration. If a young Explorer were to announce the intention to finish the bold expedition his predecessor had begun, a spinner of tall tales may well turn to full-on charlatanry, offering to sell the coordinates of his ancient voyage for a premium price.

Anyone foolhardy enough to follow such a trail is likely to end up a corpse in the depths of unexplored space, but some may be lucky to find a discovery of note or even learn that the old Explorer's tale wasn't so tall after all.

Explorers may be the most notorious tellers of tall tales, but they aren't the only ones. Big-game hunters are keen to tell one another of "the one that got away," which might involve an old journey to Dathomir in which the hunter spotted an adult rancor far bigger than any previously reported or an opee sea killer larger than a house spotted while once fishing on Naboo. Traders might talk of the time they could have closed the biggest deal of their careers with a rich mercantile house only to inadvertently breach a strange taboo peculiar to the culture of his hosts. Even fringers might talk of some great survivalist challenge they overcame, like living alone in the desert of Tatooine for a month on a diet of raw womp rat.

CRAFTING SCENES

Scenes are the basic building blocks of an adventure; each one is a short episode that encapsulates a single event in the game. A scene can be anything from a negotiation with a snarky smuggler, to a chase through a treacherous asteroid field, or even a structured combat encounter.

Scenes that do not add anything of note to the actual plot of the adventure should be employed with caution. Adding in too many of them can cause a great deal of distraction as the players lose the focus of their main objectives and any sort of narrative arc the GM has tried to give to the adventure. However, when employed in moderation, they can be useful for a number of reasons. They can help remind the PCs that the galaxy goes on while they have their adventures and that other beings are engaged in events tangential to the goals that press most urgently upon the party. They can also be a source of light relief or used to foreshadow events or themes that the GM plans to introduce at a later point.



A BIGGER GALAXY OUT THERE

Short scenes are a great way to let PCs know that they and those NPCs with whom they interact are not the only beings in the galaxy and that other adventures and undertakings are happening all the time. The *Star Wars* galaxy is a particularly varied and cosmopolitan place, even with the Empire in charge, and multifarious alien species and droids will pass the PCs by on all but the most remote of worlds. Designing some short scenes, as trivial as the words spoken by a food vendor as the PCs walk past or a short description of a clunky old droid that happens to catch their eye, can really help underscore the fact that the galaxy is busy and varied.

Such scenes should be dealt with using a light touch, as they are the types of scenes most likely to draw the PCs away from the plot of an adventure. For example, it might please a GM to illustrate the variety of the inhabitants of the *Star Wars* galaxy by informing his players that all manner of strange aliens and droids bustle about them as they work their way through the crowd at a spaceport. This is understandable, and it is a good way to convey some flavor. However, the more the GM draws the players' attention to background NPCs that have nothing to do with the plot, the more likely the players are to assume they are significant.

A great way for GMs to turn this tendency to an advantage is to anticipate that on occasion PCs will assume that a background character is important, and then know how to react when they do so.

For example, a group of PCs may arrive at a busy spaceport following instructions that they are to meet an aging Explorer who has interesting information they could use to make a great new discovery. As they work their way through the crowds, the GM informs them that they see all manner of species, including "a tall Ithorian with a wise expression and a pair of Aqualish growling and gesticulating at the owner of a food stand."

This information is merely given for the purpose of detail, but the PCs decide that maybe there is something to be gained by talking to the Ithorian or seeing what the trouble is with the Aqualish, rather than simply heading off to meet the old Explorer.

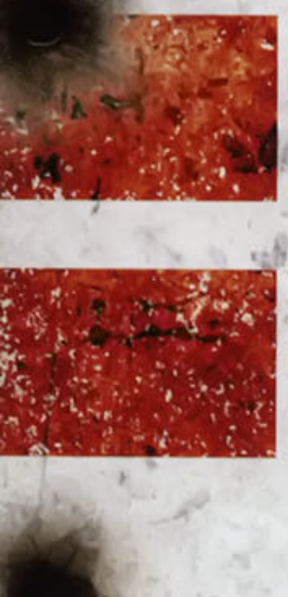
A GM who has taken the time to anticipate such an eventuality can turn the PCs' decision to focus on an irrelevant detail into a more significant scene. The Ithorian might be a talkative and friendly sort who is heading to a nearby cantina. If the PCs join him for a drink and tell him of their plans, he has some pertinent advice to give them, a warning or rumor of a particular opportunity. The Aqualish might have a genuine grievance with the food-stand owner over some poor-quality food, and the PCs could help sort the issue out before things spiral into violence.

If the GM is prepared in such a way and the PCs choose to head straight past and on to meet the old Explorer, it need not be a waste. The next time they are in a busy cosmopolitan part of the galaxy, they could be informed of a creaky old protocol droid and a group of burly Gamorreans snorting with irritation at a fat Herglic behind the bar of a small tapcafé. In this way, the GM could reuse any ideas he might have used earlier, had the PCs paid interest to either the Ithorian or the Aqualish.

LIGHT RELIEF

Light relief refers to the introduction of humorous content into what might otherwise be a serious, dramatic, or disturbing narrative. Use of light relief can reinvigorate interest in what otherwise might be an unremittingly grim story or just help add a dash of verisimilitude to things, as most people like to engage in a certain amount of humorous talk or play during their lives.

Humor is an important part of the *Star Wars* films. One of the best ways to think about how to employ light relief in roleplaying games is to consider how it is used in horror movies. There are two particular implementations to consider.



JUXTAPOSING HUMOR WITH HORROR

Imagine a scene in a horror story in which a group of young people are seen laughing and enjoying themselves. Such a scene may be used in a number of ways to establish character or gain the sympathy of the audience. However, it is quite common to juxtapose such scenes with one of shock or horror. The youngsters will take a walk in the woods and joke and flirt before suddenly coming across a gruesomely murdered corpse. That's the sort of tone that may apply to scenes.

This is an effective trick as it helps the audience appreciate those moments of horror and humor all the more due to the great contrast between them. Even if events in the movie start to become increasingly grim, most moviemakers will still find some appropriate (or highly inappropriate) moments in which to include a humorous scene or witty dialogue. In this way, they can prevent the audience becoming numb to the more horrible aspects.

This is an important concept to remember in a roleplaying game. GMs may well like to impress on their players the serious nature of horrific events and dastardly villains. If they do so without occasional shifts in tone and opportunities to have a laugh, their players are not likely to sustain an appreciation of how serious things are. They may even make their own fun in the face of the GM's efforts to horrify them, which will end up somewhat spoiling the atmosphere.

It is far better for GMs to plan for shocking and horrific content to come in short bursts and either proceed or follow such scenes with humorous content. In this way, players can get the need to laugh out of their system and will better appreciate the GM's attempts to give them a fright.

For example, maybe a GM plans to have a group of players make a sad and disturbing discovery. In this game the PCs are exploring what they think is an uncharted world, but the fact is that agents of the Empire have been using it as a testing ground. Stormtroopers have established a base here, and the GM plans to clue the PCs into their presence by having them come across a native village that has been violently purged. This is a horrible scene for which the GM would appreciate the players' general pathos.

In order to better facilitate this, the GM could employ a humorous scene, such as having the players come across some native fauna exhibiting behavior that is harmlessly slapstick, like a clumsy mating ritual or amusingly gross feeding habits. Players' attempts to interact with such a creature might lead to unintended humorous consequences, such as being showered with odd bodily fluids.

And then, when they have experienced that, they can turn the corner and discover a scene of atrocity.

MANAGING TENSION

The second way that humorous scenes are used in horror films is to help build and release tension. Usually, this is achieved through bathos, the humor involved in finding out that something was less than you expected it to be. Imagine a movie in which the heroine is stumbling along a dark corridor. She hears scratching noises from up ahead. She peers into the gloom, seeing nothing. More noises. She inches forward and approaches a shadowy alcove...and...it's just the cat! Phew. Big sigh of relief. Then more noises echo from up ahead.

This might seem like the same trick again, but it is subtly different. The juxtaposition of horror and humor prevents people finding the horror a bore. Instead, bathos found in relief enables a storyteller to receive twice the benefit from any tension he is able to inflict upon his audience. After all, the viewers only discover that the catharsis they felt at the discovery of the cat was premature, once the scratching noises start again.

A great way to employ this sort of humorous scene might be during the exploration of a labyrinthine tomb complex, the sort of operation that might be expected of an Archaeologist character. Strange writings on the wall might give clues to a mysterious malady that is decimating the locals, and darting movements can be perceived in the depths of the tunnels. The PCs travel further into the tomb complex, leaving a protocol droid to work on the hieroglyphics. The PCs close in on the movements, discerning them to be shadows cast by an odd creature.

The PCs finally corner the beast in a central room to discover it is just a local herd animal that made its way inside. Then a communicator trills, and the protocol droid informs the party that the hieroglyphics warn against entering the tomb. The door to the chamber slams shut, and the walls begin to close in...

PROS AND CONS OF FORESHADOWING

Foreshadowing is a term used to describe the appearance of characters or themes that do not seem to be initially significant but later come to be important parts of the story. Foreshadowing can be helpful in terms of exposition, when plot elements are explained to those watching or listening. It can also be useful to provide a sense of tension as those engaged with the plot wish to find out more about a mysterious character, only to have the same character more fully examined in the future.

One of the best ways in which a GM can employ a scene is to foreshadow an event or character that he plans to introduce more explicitly in a later session. PCs may undergo a quick meeting with a strange in-

dividual, overhear rumors of odd goings-on, or bear witness to a bizarre event, and the meaning of such a scene may seem entirely inconsequential at first. If the GM has made such occasions memorable, it will pay dividends later on when it becomes clear that the scene had pertinence to the bigger picture.

A GM should be very careful with this. The temptation can be to draw too much attention to such details and confuse the players as to the focus of their mission. Some GMs are very happy to let their players wander off course and engage in all matter of tangencies, while others like to focus on driving through the plot at a fairly brisk pace. Players who are presented with a bizarre scene designed to foreshadow an event to come may divert their efforts into trying to work out what it is they just witnessed. If prevented from doing so, they may become justifiably paranoid and overly vigilant for more clues as to what happened. If this is the sort of effect the GM wishes to achieve, then that is one thing. However, if he would rather the PCs continue to focus on a more long-term plot, then it is a good idea for him to have something else occur, like an event that helps them realize their more immediate priorities.

For example, imagine a game where the players are attempting to make a clandestine trading deal with Anaxsi merchants while escaping the notice of Imperial agents whose interference would prevent such a thing. The GM has plans to bring this adventure to a close in a few more sessions, after which he will introduce a new plot in which the PCs follow a lead given to them by a Sullustan Explorer. Following up on his story will take the PCs to an uncharted area of the galaxy to investigate a strange planet.

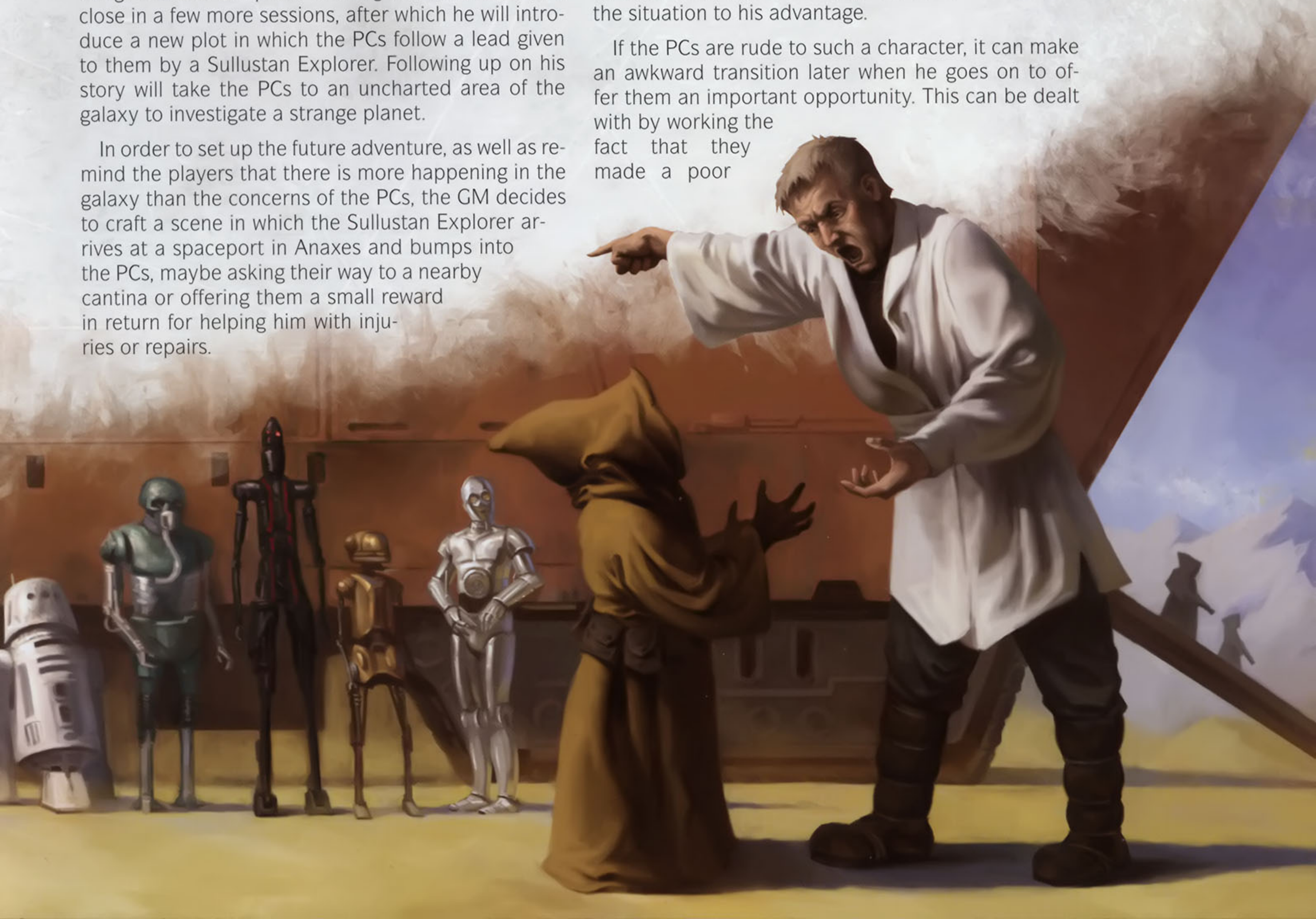
In order to set up the future adventure, as well as remind the players that there is more happening in the galaxy than the concerns of the PCs, the GM decides to craft a scene in which the Sullustan Explorer arrives at a spaceport in Anaxes and bumps into the PCs, maybe asking their way to a nearby cantina or offering them a small reward in return for helping him with injuries or repairs.

This is a fine way to foreshadow the later adventures that the GM has planned, but there are two problems that can result from such scenes.

The first is that the PCs become distracted and begin to prematurely focus on the new elements that have been introduced. If this is the case, the best remedy is to have a dramatic event occur that is explicitly tied to the main plot, such as the arrival of a group of stormtroopers instigating a desperate fight in which the Sullustan can slip away. Such an event hopefully reminds the PCs of their present priorities. Even if they do attempt to track down the alien after their confrontation with the agents of the Empire, the GM can inform the PCs that his trail has gone cold for the time being.

Another potential problem when introducing PCs to an apparently incidental character who goes on to become important is that they may react to him in a violent or obnoxious manner. This sort of reaction can be expected from time to time as a natural result of the paranoia mentioned earlier. Players who are introduced to a character who seems important—without it being clear as to why—can be suspicious and behave aggressively as a result. This can be off putting to GMs who are understandably invested in the character they created, but it's important not to panic in such a situation. If a GM thinks his players may react poorly to a scene with a character he would like them to trust, there are a few steps he could take to turn the situation to his advantage.

If the PCs are rude to such a character, it can make an awkward transition later when he goes on to offer them an important opportunity. This can be dealt with by working the fact that they made a poor



first impression into the story. When the character finally approaches the PCs, he might mention that he thought they were irresponsible or rude at first but has since learned of their exploits and has come to respect them. He now has an interesting proposal they may wish to listen to.

If the players really burned their bridges to the extent that they react violently against such a character, then there are ways to acknowledge such events without spoiling the future adventures you have planned. The GM can simply change the fact that the person who leads the PCs into the exploration was the individual they just crossed. For example, imagine if a group of PCs have a strange scene with an eccentric Explorer who would go on to offer them an interesting job if they managed to bond, but instead they begin arguing and finish him off in a hail of blaster fire. Rather than have this spoil the GM's plans, he could work it into the very reason that the PCs end up undertaking the journey. Perhaps it transpires that the Explorer had a rival who is happy to learn that the PCs fought his enemy, and he offers them the opportunity instead. Perhaps the dead man was actually a friend of someone to whom the PCs owe an obligation; the fact that they fought him increases this



duty and the best way to clear it is to undertake the planned expedition.

In offering such advice, it is not assumed that either PCs or GMs should be blind to the consequences of needlessly aggressive behavior. PCs should not have the license to burn bridges with any NPC they choose without finding that they sometimes make life harder for themselves in the process. However, it would be a shame if the GM felt he had to go back to the drawing board and scrap adventures just because his players caused injury or affront to those NPCs who provide the opportunities needed to proceed.

MAKING MEMORABLE CHARACTERS

It would be an impossible task for a GM to conceive and convincingly enact a distinctive character for each of the hundreds of NPCs that may be used in a campaign. As such, it is important to identify which characters the PCs are most likely to interact with, spend time with, and remember, and to invest them with a few quirks and mannerisms to help make the most of them. A GM with the time to do so would really help distinguish his performance by thinking of distinct attributes to give interesting NPCs.

GMs can derive real benefits from developing a talent for distinguishing his normal style of presentation from the attitude he strikes while portraying a character. One such benefit is that it becomes easy to tell when he is in character or not. This can save quite a bit of time and confusion that can result from all those "Did you really just say that?" moments in a game, when the players and GM do not clearly distinguish what is said in character from what is said out of character. It can also add a lot of energy and humor to a game, which is usually a good thing. Roleplaying is a form of entertainment, after all.

VOICE

As running a role-playing game is (usually) a matter of talking to a group of players, the most obvious way in which a GM can distinguish NPCs from one another is to nurture a talent for doing different voices. A GM with a talent for doing impressions, whether they are of celebrities, classmates, or work colleagues, may be able to develop a wide repertoire of different NPCs each with his own voice. For those without the talent or confidence, just trying a different accent or inflection, varying pace or pitch, or even simply speaking while holding his nose can help distinguish key NPCs.

LANGUAGE

Another way of distinguishing NPCs from one another is to consider what language they use. This is not to say that one needs to be able to speak fluent Huttese in order to make an effective GM (though no denigration of such a talent is implied either). This is more about what sort of vocabulary particular characters employ and what it might imply about them. Flowery language can be employed by those with pretentious airs and jargon by those who identify strongly with a particular vocation. Those who wish to be seen as being at home on the streets may utilize a deal of slang and pop-culture references.

HABITS

Vocal tics or mannerisms, such as spitting at the end of each sentence, sucking teeth, coughing, or tutting can also help distinguish NPCs.

DESCRIPTION

Deciding on a few details about the character's appearance and making mention of them can also help, particularly if the GM does not feel comfortable giving an odd vocal performance. Don't overdo it with long and detailed descriptions; few players appreciate them in comparison to keeping the pace up and allowing them to get on with activity and interaction. Little and often is far more effective. Cultivating the talent for being able to say such things as "Frella looks down her long nose at you for a moment before speaking" or "as he listens to the accusation, the trader blushes a deep beetroot red" can provide a GM with little snippets that he can return to in order to give his PCs a flavor of the character's quirks.

PROPS

GMs should be careful how they employ props, as too liberal a use could see your games descend into farce. With that said, subtle employment of a few trademark items can be an instant indication to PCs that they are talking to a particular NPC of note.

RUMORS

Of course, having gone to all this effort of creating an individual and eccentric NPC, he will not just leave an impression on the PCs but also on other people in the area. Other NPCs may be interested in the character and wish to talk to the PCs about him, sharing rumors and gossip about what he might be up to and commenting on his quirks. A GM should not overplay this, as the PCs should remain the stars of the show and players who find that the GM is more interested in his own creations than their characters are likely to find it frustrating.



ADVENTURES AND MISSIONS

In creating an adventure, it is well worth considering what the archetypal elements of an adventure story are and how to employ them in a roleplaying game. Roleplaying and storytelling clearly share much in common, though the collaborative aspects of roleplaying must also be brought to the fore of any session. Some GMs make the mistake of treating their players as a captive audience rather than participants. This isn't to say that any given player should be able to draw the spotlight away from the GM but that the GM would do well to work player interaction and decisions into his games as much as possible.

With that said, the following advice regarding what goes in to make a typical story may prove useful.

STORY CONSTRUCTION

This is a summary of some of the more archetypal themes and patterns involved in storytelling. It is not presented as a guide to how all roleplaying game plots should be written. Indeed, if it were to be followed rigorously and repeatedly it could lead to formulaic games with predictable structures. The advice on its own is overly reductionist, merely describing a firm set of foundations for a story that must afterward be fully realized by the GM's own personal details and structural changes.

THE BEGINNING: A CALL TO ADVENTURE

The beginning of a story, particularly those sorts of stories that form the basis of a decent roleplaying game, clues the characters in to the fact that there is a situation they can involve themselves in. A change in circumstances occurs, and that threatens the normal, everyday existence of the characters and their social order. This is a change that is usually for the worse.

These changes to normality can be singular or numerous, subtle or profound. The rise of a totalitarian galactic Empire that undermines the more civilized aspects of the Galactic Republic is a profound change. The discovery that an R2 unit you bought to help on the farm is carrying a secret message is another change, less profound but just as much a call to adventure.

One thing that experts tell us to expect from stories but that still surprises some GMs when it occurs is that the heroes of a particular tale often initially refuse to recognize their part in it. As a result, they may be reluctant to join in with the unfolding events. In *Star Wars*, Luke does not rush to relay Princess Leia's message to Ben Kenobi, and when he does eventually meet Ben, he is not initially convinced to help further. It is only after the further provocation of learning that stormtroopers have killed his relatives that he finally shows some commitment to the adventure ahead of him.





Perhaps it is because of this trope that many GMs find it a bit of a challenge to initially inspire their players. It can be frustrating if, after all the business of creating characters and setting the scene, the PCs fail to follow plot hooks at the start of a game. It could be well worth the time for a new GM to think of a few different hooks that he can employ in order to properly motivate his players.

This does not mean that players will always ignore initial hooks, and it certainly isn't to say that players should ignore them; it's just that GMs shouldn't be too surprised or panicked when this sort of behavior occurs. This is because it is probably not a matter of players needlessly trying to complicate matters or not wanting to play the game but of them following a common archetype of storytelling.

So when preparing to run an adventure in which a single hook is seemingly adequate, the GM should prepare one or two additional hooks. He can then use them upon the party if they are slow to take the bait or even miss it altogether. If the players are game and quickly launch into the adventure without further motivation, then the unused hooks can be set aside to be adjusted and reemployed the next time new plot twists or adventures are due to take place.

Another common aspect of the beginning of a story is the crossing of a frontier, at which point the heroes encounter those who have been out there before, people who have often been rendered strange or dangerous as a result of their own attempts to master the fates. In *Star Wars*, the cantina scene is populated by all manner of strange, grotesque, and dangerous people and is a representative example of the sort of place that marks the end of the hero's old humdrum existence and the beginning of his new life of adventure.

THE MIDDLE: A TIME OF TRIALS

The middle of a story consists of a set of challenges to be faced by the heroes in pursuit of righting (or failing to right) the upsets to normality that were involved in the beginning. The meat of the story is involved with the heroes coming up against these challenges. The most obvious and dramatic form of challenge pertinent to most roleplaying games will be violent conflicts with enemies. Fights are usually well catered for in roleplaying games, but they need not be the only sort of conflict included as part of a game or campaign.

Fringers often pit themselves against nature itself, braving the elements and subsisting off the land. Conflict might take the form of traversing a wide and dangerous landscape in order to find resources, dealing with the unexpected arrival of a dangerous predator, or coping with the consequences of environmental upheaval.

During the course of their everyday work, Scouts are faced with following trails and entering fresh territory, tasks which are often challenging in and of themselves. Conflict might arise from their quarry actively trying to throw the tail, turning on the pursuer, or taking a dangerous route.

Striving to achieve the best result from tense negotiation should be a familiar situation to Traders. Challenge may come from haggling with a canny merchant or striking a deal that comes with ethical concerns or criminal implications. Negotiations that take place within a strange so-

ciety may make interesting challenges as the Trader has to adapt to unusual cultural norms and new notions of what is or isn't taboo.

Archaeologists set themselves up for a challenge by virtue of the fieldwork they perform, exploring ancient sites, entering strange buildings, and (worst of all) submitting their findings to the review of their academic peers. Conflicts arise from all manner of rivals and obstacles, from tribes of primitive natives who do not wish to see their sacred sites disturbed to ingenious traps set by long-dead tomb builders. Conflict could even arise from the somewhat more mundane matter of academic rivalry in the archaeology faculties of the galaxy's top universities.

A Driver might find that a routine journey is a matter of overcoming challenges by a freak change in the weather or becoming lost in the wilderness. He may discover something unforeseen about the cargo he carries in that it is a shipment with a dangerous, desirable, or unethical component. He might find himself waylaid by highway robbers or forced to accept criminal passengers or cargo.

A great many Big-Game Hunters live for the sort of confrontations that might prove exciting adventures in and of themselves to most inhabitants of the galaxy. A hunter pitting himself against nature in the hope of bagging an impressive trophy will certainly meet with many challenges, but those who take on professional live-capture missions may have an even harder time. They not only have to find a dangerous beast but deliver it to their customer within a deadline, a tight budget, and an acceptable standard.

Often, during the course of these challenges, the heroes of a story will come across a particularly memorable and traumatic scene. This is not the same thing as the climax of the adventure, but it is an experience that places the heroes close to death. This is a metaphorical (and sometimes literal) descent into the belly of the beast. It often involves primal elements, huge monsters (or their equivalent), and water or effluvia. Such events often form the nadir of the story, a particularly bleak episode when all seems dark and hopeless. They are sometimes hallucinatory events that place the heroes in touch with their own unacknowledged drives and desires: the unconscious.

Such a scene might encompass events like the heroes of *Star Wars* becoming trapped in the trash compactor on the Death Star or the crew of the *Millennium Falcon* flying unwittingly into the gullet of a huge space slug. Such scenes were not the climaxes of their respective adventures—they may not have even been the moments at which the characters were in the greatest peril—but they did satisfy some of these archetypal notions that at some point during the story the heroes will meet with a markedly harrowing experience.

Why should such a distinctively desperate situation be archetypal of many tales? Perhaps it helps emphasize the cathartic nature of the climax. Having faced down a particularly bleak experience, the fact that the heroes go on to redeem themselves through an audacious act seems all the more remarkable.

THE END: A RETURN TO NORMALCY

The end of the archetypal heroic adventure is marked by some form of acknowledgement that a state of normalcy has been restored through the action of the hero. While the middle period of facing challenges and either overcoming them or facing further consequences as a result of failing to overcome them may continue interminably, the sense that a story has reached a satisfying conclusion comes with a feeling of restoration or redemption. For example, while *Star Wars* climaxes with the Battle of Yavin 4 and the destruction of the first Death Star, the end of the film is the more sedate affair of the ceremony in which Han and Luke are honored for their part in aiding the Rebel Alliance.

This goes toward satisfying the qualities of an ending according to this notion of archetypal story construction. Even though the Empire remains a threat, the ceremony marks that the Alliance has won the space needed for a little peace and civilization. Normalcy is restored in that the galaxy is no longer a place where squads of Imperial stormtroopers can gun down moisture farmers without fear of retribution.

SET THE SCENE THEN GET TO THE ACTION

While many storytelling tricks can be employed to great effect in a roleplaying session, remember that the PCs are those who should play the starring part and whose participation in events should often make for a deciding factor. As fun as it may be for GMs to develop fully fleshed environments and detailed character descriptions, remember that it may not be as fun listening to them for long periods at a time. If a GM feels the need to set the scene or indulge in detail he should try to do so quickly or take a "little and often" approach rather than subjecting his players to a lengthy monologue.

Another pitfall to avoid is offering players the illusion of choice when there isn't any. If a story begins with a space journey to an unexplored part of the galaxy and there isn't much for the PCs to do other than sit on board the ship until it reaches its destination, then perhaps the best tack a GM can take is to simply announce that their journey is complete. Unless the GM has some ideas for amusing events that might occur on board, it may just confuse and bore players to be asked what they plan to do during their journey.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The themes of exploration can sometimes pose a challenge for Game Masters to integrate into a campaign more focused on bounty hunting and smuggling. The following are several ideas for adventures Game Masters can include in their campaign to help engage Explorer characters in their group.

THE ANAXIAN FARCE

In ages past, Anaxes provided the core of the Galactic Republic with a formidable fortress world from which to strike at enemy invasion fleets. While the planet remains famous for its naval college and the proud part it played in military history, it has become an important trading post. It deals mostly in the high-tech goods made there and on the neighboring industrial world of Axum. To those living on the fringes, the Anaxsi are thought of as snobbish and militaristic Core Worlders. This reputation is a little unfair, considering the many Anaxsi merchants who have cool business heads and professional manners, but it is true to say that a being looking to trade here can bargain much more effectively if he has a naval past of his own to boast about.

A trader has been sent to Anaxes to strike a deal for the exclusive right to new technological device produced by one of the planet's most obnoxiously snobbish mercantile patriarchs. The trader stands to win wealth and renown if the deal succeeds. Or perhaps he has been sent there by someone to whom he owes an Obligation. Either way, he knows that he will get nowhere with the merchant unless he and his companions construct new identities for themselves that incorporate upper-class backgrounds and tales of dashing military exploits.

The players should be encouraged to create alternative identities for their characters, the more pompous and larger than life the better. Once these identities are constructed, they can make their way to Anaxes, where the merchant will be happy to receive such esteemed figures, playing a generous, if conceited, host. The GM should privately devise some sort of point-scoring system: every time one of the PCs convincingly represents some brash aspect of military life or privileged upbringing, that PC is more likely to impress the merchant, but every time he slips up, the closer he gets to failure.

More farcical elements can be introduced as the PCs attempt to win the merchant over. The merchant may take particular interest in the PCs' fictional military histories and pump them for increasingly minute details and surprise twists. For example, a PC who purports to have played a part in a particular campaign might find himself suddenly asked to justify a related atrocity. One of the phony identities created by a PC might come too close to resembling a real military figure, resulting in a case of mistaken identity. Just as the deal looks set to close, an acquaintance of the PCs appears and threatens to blow their cover. This could be an innocent mistake on the part of a friend, requiring some fast talk to solve, or the actions of someone with more hostile ulterior motives that would require a significant favor in order to satisfy.

MISSION TO MIMBAN

While the Circarpous system is home to a number of busy and inhabited worlds and Mimban has been home to a small human settlement for many years, the planet had remained largely unexplored. The hands-off approach to the planet was an act of consideration shown to a pair of native sentient species, the Mimbanites and the Coway. These aliens lead a primitive lifestyle and have not had much contact with the wider galactic society. So, until recently, they were being left to develop in relative peace.

This changed when the Empire discovered that dolovite ore could be found on the planet. Dolovite is a metal used in the construction of starships, and a barrel of ore is currently fetching a price upward of 760 credits. The Empire has constructed five mining colonies on Mimban and manages extensive mining operations there that have ravaged the planet. The employment of energy drills has released a noxious cloud of radioactive particles into Mimban's atmosphere. The "Greenies," as the Mimbanites are termed by those who wish to disparage them, are compliant enough provided that they can beg liquor from miners. The Coway, hidden in their underground settlements, show more hostility to outsiders.

A Scout PC is employed by agents of the Empire, maybe in order to pay off Obligation or simply to receive a reward. The agents might spin the situation on Mimban, claiming that there is merely one small mine on the planet and that the operation there is very clean. They even configure such a mine as a "show mine" that skeptics can visit, populated by well-paid workers who know how to lie.

The Empire wants to develop a comprehensive guide to the underground tunnel complexes that riddle the planet. This is partly in order to speculate for more dolovite, and this is what the Scout will be asked to do, but mostly it is to find and log the position of Coway settlements. The Scout will be told to mark Coway positions but do nothing to disturb them due to their hostility.

The adventure will seem like a fairly standard exploration of an unknown environment, though the PCs may become increasingly suspicious as they find evidence of wanton destruction during their exploration. The dolovite fields they were told to expect seem few and far between, while the Coway villages are more frequently encountered. As time passes, the PCs may also find themselves increasingly ill, a result of the radioactive particles that their employers neglected to tell them about.

THE GREAT BESPIN ZOOLOGICAL HEIST

Tibanna gas is big business, for it is needed to produce a highly effective coolant often used in the manufacture of blasters and spaceship hyperdrives. The gas is harvested on a single planet, Bespin, and trade in the gas has made the planet rich.

Bespin is a gas giant, but Tibanna is not found in the atmospheres of any other gaseous world in the galaxy. The planet is also unusual in that it is home to a thriving ecosystem of fauna and flora that live within the billowing clouds. Bespin's atmosphere is home to colossal invertebrate gas grazers known as beldons, which are fed upon in their turn by predatory velkers. The bodies of such creatures are scavenged by bat-like rawwks that roost within abandoned mining platforms.

The processes that go on to produce the gas are not fully understood. The gas is excreted by beldons, and so the best guess as to its origin is that the creatures produce it as a waste product. Beldons are protected by law on Bespin and are dangerous at close quarters due to being highly flammable. However, it has occurred to some that poaching a breeding population of beldons and transporting them to a gas giant similar to Bespin might enable a second source of Tibanna, with all the wealth that would go with it.

A Big-Game Hunter could be approached by someone who believes he has found a planet upon which beldons could be farmed. Collecting beldons from under the nose of the administrator-baron of Cloud City would be a dangerous task. Not only would the hunter have to avoid the local authorities but he would also have dangerous encounters with velkers and rawwks. The beldons themselves possess passive defenses, such as producing a strong surrounding electrical field, which makes them tricky to capture.

Other organisms, such as the symbiotic triggerbirds who live within the tentacles of beldons and the velkers who thin out weak and aging members of the herd, may also be required in order to set up a sustainable population. In this regard, the Big-Game Hunter may be required to make off with a representative sample of Bespin's whole ecosystem or make a few return trips in order to collect a previously overlooked organism.



EXPLORER NEMESES

One thing that the scope of a campaign offers to the GM is the chance to turn some of his more memorable NPCs into recurring characters whose names the PCs come to dread. GMs could use the rules for nemesis NPCs to help design these villains.

Many of the nemeses familiar to players of **Edge of the Empire** will have their part to play in the business of exploration. Hutt gang bosses and agents of the Empire alike have significant vested interests in the opening up of new frontiers, and they may sponsor

the PCs initially only to turn on them if they become disappointed or suspect them of knowing too much.

Here are a few ideas for other nemesis NPCs that might cross the path of an Explorer character.



THE RIVAL

This nemesis need not be a character who seeks to physically harm the PCs; in fact his attitude may even be one of good-natured competition. The rival is someone who works in the same field as the character and who manages to compete with him at much the same level of competence. The rival has a good name for himself, and the PC may begin to get the feeling that every time he is on the verge of achieving a significant goal, the rival has managed to get there first or otherwise outshine him.

A Trader character might spend some time in negotiation with a possible new client only to find that the rival managed to close the deal first. A Big-Game Hunter might bag a huge rancor only to learn that the rival brought down an even larger beast. A Scout might come across a previously uncharted world only to find that the rival planted his flag there a few scant hours earlier.

The GM could employ the rival in a number of different ways. An interesting and entertaining use of the character might be as light relief. In this regard, the rival is a rather harmless but irritating recurring character who should possess some colorful character flaws. As the PCs undergo their adventures, their paths may cross with that of the rival in cantinas and markets across the galaxy. The fact that the rival often seems to have outperformed the PCs could be made all the more galling by dint of the fact that he is boorish or, even worse, boring.

This could make for a fun recurring character, but be careful. The rival should never actually achieve anything of significance regarding the plot of the adventure, lest the PCs feel that they are no longer the focus of the game. Rather, after they have won their hard-fought victory or retreated from danger in order to lick their wounds, they should come to learn that he performed an act of similar significance and did so with greater ease or aplomb.

Such a character might even be used as a teaching aid to players, albeit an annoying one that should be used sparingly. For example, if the PCs survived a bruising encounter by the skin of their teeth, the rival might casually inform them of a cheap and widely available piece of equipment that he put to good use in the same situation.

Another way in which the rival could be employed to strong effect is to have him develop over the course of the PCs' adventures from being a harmless and inconsequential background character into a dangerous antagonist. The rival could be introduced early on as an Explorer of little renown. After a few adventures, the PCs could meet him again and discover that he has raised his game, becoming something of a competitor. A little while later he could begin competing with them in earnest, becoming more desperate and unethical in his attempts to outshine them. His style of play could become increasingly dirty. From minor acts of cheating, he could move on to sabotage or even frame the PCs, and the downward spiral of their relationship with the rival could climax in a violent confrontation.



THE GREAT BEAST

The great beast is the most obvious nemesis with which to confront a Big-Game Hunter, though such creatures could also make life difficult for Scouts, Fringers, Archaeologists, and Drivers in the course of their usual activities. The great beast is a particularly monstrous example of a species already renowned for its dangerous nature. It could be a krayt dragon of prodigious proportion, a lylek that has developed a ravenous craving for the taste of human flesh, or a pale and aging sando aqua monster that has been ousted from its territory by a younger rival.

The great beast is no simple brute, however, for amongst those qualities that mark it out from its fellow creatures is a degree of intelligence that makes it a truly fearsome foe. It also bears a deep-seated grudge against those who would cross its path or attempt to hunt it down.

While the great beast no doubt possesses the sort of profile that would enable it to take on a whole army, its real strength lies in its knowledge of its home turf. Rather than merely turning on its pursuers and tearing them apart with tooth and claw, it leads them along an exhausting and hazardous route, employing all manner of ruses to waylay and injure them. The great beast knows the lairs of other dangerous animals in its terrain and will try to lead hunters there. It knows the positions of volcanic vents, pits of quicksand, nests of stinging bugs, and piles of unstable rocks and will beat a trail past such hazards so that any incautious pursuers blunder right into them. It will observe the behavior of those who track it, waiting for them to stop in order to set camp, cook a meal, or tend the injured. At such a moment it will attempt to sneak up on isolated members of the party and make a lightning-fast hit-and-run attack. It will not allow its pursuers rest. When they camp for the night it will position itself outside the range of their guns and screech incessant blood-curdling howls. The great beast will no doubt have its lair within a labyrinthine cavern and will know its every twist and turn. It will use such territory to make darting flank attacks and beat hasty retreats. Only when its pursuers are exhausted, demoralized, low on ammunition, and already suffering from injury will it finally give them a straight fight.

A GM wishing to utilize the great beast should spend some time mapping out its territory. The hazards that the creature will use to distract or injure the PCs should be positioned, and the GM should provide alternative routes with which careful PCs could avoid them at the cost of allowing the great beast more time to consider its own plans. Items should also be available in the territory to help the PCs mitigate some of the hazards around them. For example, vines could be cut to help drag allies from quicksand or slow-burning leaves could be used to quell an angry nest of insects. Players who come to realize that it is the territory itself that presents as much a threat as the great beast should be rewarded for any clever action they take. Individual hazards should be easy enough to overcome, but at no point should the great beast itself prove anything less than the most dangerous and cunning of opponents.

THE MISSIONARY

The missionary is an ideologue with a particular (and probably peculiar) perspective on religion, politics, or philosophy who has found himself rebuffed by mainstream society. As a consequence, the missionary, in company of a few loyal followers, has removed himself to an unexplored quarter of the galaxy where he has encountered a primitive society. This is a fortunate event, and it has spurred the missionary and his followers on with increasing confidence, for surely some sort of providence has seen fit to lead them to a safe home with a captive audience.

The primitive natives, awed by the sudden appearance of the missionary and the technological marvels he possesses, are curious to learn more, and canny members of the missionary's party have been clever enough to learn a little of native customs and culture in order to draw parallels between them and the missionary's own message. In time, the missionary hopes to spread his message throughout the planet's population, embodying his vision of a better society.

Of course, it might really throw a spanner in the works if some Explorers arrived and began to interfere.

The missionary might be a benevolent individual imposing his vision with the best of intent. In such cases, it may not be the missionary himself but members of his entourage who present the real danger. These people may be members of the missionary's followers who seek to exploit his newfound audience for reasons of their own. They could even be members of the primitive people who see the missionary as a way to shake up the status quo of their own community and provide the opportunity for a grab for power.

In most cases, it will be the missionary himself who is engaged in promoting his own interests above those of the people who follow him. In such circumstances, dealing with the missionary might involve a descent into a heart of darkness, where bloodthirsty and violent aspects of the primitive culture in which the missionary resides have been co-opted to the service of radical religious or philosophical ideas.

When first arriving on a new world, the Explorer characters may be unaware of the existence of the missionary but may come to suspect that something is causing a rapid cultural upheaval amongst the primitive population of the planet. The first real clue as to what is going on could come from the fact that certain tribes (those who have joined the missionary's cause) possess technologically advanced items or speak certain portentous phrases in heavily accented Basic. Investigating how such things came to be on the planet could lead the PCs into conflict with followers of the missionary, loyalist tribes, and eventually his well-equipped and zealous inner circle.

There is one weakness particular to the missionary that clever PCs might exploit, which is the gratitude he shows them if they pretend sincere conversion to his ideology. Provided they are willing to flatter the missionary in this way, he would likely drop his guard and accept their presence on the world. Less naive members of his entourage would not be so easily fooled, so even in such circumstances the PCs would have to be very careful.

THE RISKS AND REWARDS OF EXPLORATION

Exploration of the stars is a mission that inspires a great deal of excitement among those with an ambition to do so and a great deal of admiration from most of those who don't possess the courage to leave the confines of civilized space.

Those few Explorers who do discover a new planet worthy of settlement, a new alien civilization, or a stable new hyperspace route are lauded by peers and the public alike and may even go down in history for the important role they played in furthering the interests of galactic civilization. As such, it is easy to see why, despite all the attendant risk, a constant stream of intrepid individuals departs from spaceports all over the galaxy in order to ply the stars in the search of something new.

This section takes a closer look at some of the risks and rewards of exploration.

DISCOVERING NEW WORLDS AND SYSTEMS

The known galaxy is by no means poor in resources or habitable worlds, yet the discovery of new areas to exploit or colonize is the most obvious way in which Explorers can win wealth and regard.

Those who manage the galaxy's many corporate interests are always keen to learn of ways to outmaneuver their competitors and lay claim to sources of raw materials. Some corporations may even pay good money for knowledge of raw materials that they

themselves do not make use of, as long as the rights to keep the location safe and secret from their competitors are a part of the deal.

An example of the sorts of opportunities a mineral-rich world might provide an Explorer would be the discovery of an asteroid belt or desolate planet rich in oridium. The mineral is used in the creation of ion engines used as the main propulsion in the TIE-fighter craft that form an important part of the Imperial Navy. An Explorer coming across such a resource might well consider one of five main options.

He could let the Empire know. This wouldn't necessarily be the most lucrative investment, though the Explorer would receive a decent reward and earn something of a name for himself as a competent and professional individual. Agents of the Empire would certainly regard it as the proper thing for an Explorer to surrender knowledge of interesting finds in such a manner and may well see to it that such individuals are provided with help and the opportunity to continue such work in the future.

He could inform a relevant guild or the Corporate Sector Authority. Unless the Explorer is keen to improve his standing with the Empire, this is certainly a more rewarding option than that described above. Informing the Corporate Sector Authority is a fine way to make money and garner a reputation. The Corporate Sector Authority will pay good credit for the location of a verifiable source of useful raw materials and would be happy enough to let the Explorer take credit for his discovery once it is verified and secure.

He could let a manufacturer of ion engines know. This would be the most obvious way to make money from the find, as those corporations that use the material typically pay the best price for it. However, there is little glory to be had in such a transaction. The corporation involved is most likely to require some form of confidentiality agreement to be put into place while it arranges its operation and protects itself from any competitors. By the time the corporation is happy to let the Explorer take credit for the discovery, it might be years later and no longer much of a surprise. However, this sort of deal is likely to be the most lucrative from the Explorer's point of view.

He could let a manufacturer of other types of propulsion know. This is a more risky deal, as it may well be that the competitor is not willing to pay out for such information. If the Explorer concerned earns himself a reputation for such activity, it may well irk powerful groups (such as the Empire, guilds, or the Corporate Sector Authority, which have an interest in seeing that such resources are utilized by those best placed to use them). However, some corporations will pay large sums to ensure that the locations of sources of raw materials are kept secret. An Explorer with such knowledge is also more likely to receive smaller payments, but such



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Current Coordinates: 83°64'12" N 54°24'48" W
Rhen Var

Objective: Rakatan Expedition

I'll never admit it to his face, but Keth may have been right. He definitely kept his wits better than Jan and me inside those tunnels, so when he warned me not to use the vibrosaw, I should have probably listened. Admittedly it was a bit louder than I expected, but I would like to see him excavate something out of that amount of ice without making a bit of noise!

As the noise from the saw echoed down the icy tunnels, we began hearing other sounds—sounds of things moving in the dark. Keth gave me his classic "I told you so" look that he uses way too often, and Jan started making some snide remark about my intelligence (or lack thereof). I tried to tune them out as I continued to work on removing the Rakatan relics we had found. Keth shouldered his rifle, preparing to ward off whatever we had awakened; he knew that if we didn't get these relics out of here in one piece, we would have more problems than just some local fauna.

Why do all the ruins worth exploring always have to contain the giant, dangerous monsters? I remember an excavation I was once a part of on some desert planet in the Unknown Region—the only creatures in the dig site were tiny, adorable little lizards. I want more places like that. Though, I suppose if all the finds in the galaxy were that easy to get to, this line of work wouldn't be quite as lucrative. Besides, if there weren't things to fight off, what would Keth get to do?

Levat

payments may be ongoing provided he keeps his secret (effectively blackmailing the corporation with the threat of selling the location unless regular retainers are forthcoming).

He could let a criminal or clandestine organization know. It is only likely to be ideologically motivated Explorers who take this route, as money and fame are more easily won elsewhere. However, there are many criminals, pirates, black marketers, and rebels who would be keen to learn of such discoveries. In the case of oridium, for example, the Rebel Alliance would certainly like to see access to such material denied to the Empire, even if the propulsion units of their own spacecraft make little use of it. Hutt gang lords may know of a way to move the precious ore through the black market, though the return to the Explorer would be a fraction of that likely offered by a corporate client. The Explorer could even make a little on the side by selling any information pertinent to the discovery to information gatherers, such as a Bothan spy, though the financial reward for such a transaction would be relatively small.

In games of **Edge of the Empire**, the PCs are likely to owe Obligation to groups such as those mentioned above, and clearly the discovery of sources of new raw materials is a good way to pay such Obligation off. Alternatively, if a similar group were to learn that the Explorer had ignored them when dealing in a valuable resource, it could be a source of new Obligation, as the Explorer would have to provide some sort of compensation if he wished to make amends with the injured party. For example, if an Explorer with a history of dealing with a powerful criminal syndicate such as Black Sun were to sell the location of a newly discovered oridium-rich asteroid to the Empire, it would very likely cause some resentment among the Explorers criminal associates, who would very much like to have been consulted about such an opportunity first. Of course, if the Explorer dealt with such criminals, he might very well land himself in trouble with a guild, the Empire, or Hutt rivals. It should come as no surprise that often the most successful Explorers are those who are skilled in diplomacy.

Despite these considerations, raw materials are perhaps the most straightforward resource to deal with in this manner. A fertile world that is home to life is a trickier proposition. The world may be suitable for farming, or edible life might be foraged or hunted there. If the Explorer is equipped to survey and catalogue the world's native species and take samples of the soil, he may then be able to figure out what sort of corporation or entity could make best use of it. Here, fugitives such as the Rebel Alliance could make the best customers, as they would be likely to pay very well for knowledge of a habitable yet uncharted world from which they could strike out at the Empire.

Some care must be exercised in this operation. Explorers are advised to heed the cautionary tale of Viron Ghartoth, a Devaronian trailblazer who charted several fresh hyperroutes to the most spinward extremes of the Outer Rim. Viron is credited with the discovery of the Paralyngian dire slug, a bloated gastropod that he deemed excellent when lightly broiled. He presented his patron, Gerba the Hutt, with a dish of the slugs in fruit sauce but was ignorant of the virulent allergic reaction they proceeded to have on the Hutt constitution. Gerba never fully recovered, but from his sickbed he saw to it that Viron was slowly torn apart and consumed by his captive acklay.

In the present time of Imperial subjugation and persecution, some of the more ideologically motivated Explorers are happy to let refugees know of newly discovered and habitable worlds. Certain Wookiee and Mon Calamari factions hope to escape the iron fist of the Empire, at least temporarily, by finding a new world with the sort of habitat suitable for their needs and lifestyle.

However, there is a downside to alien diasporas that Explorers have to consider. Such communities are already likely to have hidden themselves on worlds that lie outside the reaches of civilized space but not so far beyond the fringes that they are utterly isolated from the civilized galaxy. In other words, these communities inhabit exactly the sort of worlds that are most likely to be encountered by Explorers delving into new territory. Due to their history as refugees and fugitives, the members of these communities are often rather paranoid in character, which is understandable enough given the persecution they have experienced. They are therefore not likely to be pleased to be discovered, especially by those Explorers who are known to work for or with the Empire. Such Explorers may well find themselves imprisoned or even threatened with execution.

Rewards need not take the form of credit. Paying off Obligation is an important motivator in games of **Edge of the Empire**, and the GM should not be too stingy in doing so. However, maintaining some Obligations is also important, and this is why it may be worth considering that in many cases the PCs could earn the enmity of one individual as they pay off Obligation to another. This should not mean that the PCs are held in a constant cycle of Obligation or debt but just that it can be a case of two steps forward, one step back.

Those for whom the PCs do a favor who have nothing with which to reward them may well owe some obligation to the players themselves. This can be an effective tool to employ in the context of a campaign where recurring characters can really come into their own. The PCs may even find that getting back in touch with people who owe them favors can lead to little side adventures.

SPONSORS

In addition to the Corporate Sector Authority, the Empire, and the Rebel Alliance, there are many other beings and organizations that might seek to sponsor Explorers. Such individuals and organizations would make suitable contacts to whom PCs could owe Obligation or to whom they could turn for additional funds, equipment, and leads.



THE HYPERSPACE NAVIGATORS GUILD

This organization is foremost amongst the guilds and corporations that have a vested interest in space travel. The Hyperspace Navigators Guild is most interested in the blazing of new hyperroutes, but it would also be interested in discoveries made regarding realspace. Any find that might contribute to the discipline of Astrogation would likely earn a cash reward from members of the brotherhood.

BEARERS OF THE CLAATUVAC STACKS

The Claatuvac stacks are portable copies of the data that was once held by the Claatuvac guild on Kashyyyk. The stacks were entrusted to a small band of Wookiees who swore to keep the knowledge secret until such a time as Wookiee culture could be revived. The information on the stacks combines to give the most comprehensive star charts and hyperroute maps in existence.

The bearers of the stacks are sought by all manner of bounty hunters and mercenaries, and they would not reveal themselves lightly. However, if such a Wookiee were to learn of Explorers who had gained knowledge that could be added to the stacks, he might just be curious enough to get in touch. Such a Wookiee might also make a good Explorer character, though he would have to be very vigilant indeed.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF KOOROO

The shrines of Kooroo are squat ziggurats that can be found on a number of planets. No one is exactly sure what purpose they serve or even if they have any actual relationship with the being named Kooroo. The Fellowship of Kooroo believe that they do, though, and base their rather odd faith at the shrines. Force-sensitive visitors to the shrines sometimes experience odd visions, and some academics conjecture that the shrines may have a part to play in telepathic communication or could be a teleportation network. The shrines are found dotted about on worlds throughout the Outer Rim, but no one has much idea about the origins of their construction. They may also be on worlds that have yet to be discovered or explored. Many members of the Fellowship believe that there are more shrines out there and may well lend aid to any expedition they think might find more.



THE DISCOVERY OF INHABITED PLANETS AND SYSTEMS

Exciting as it is to find anything of note at the end of a previously uncharted hyperspace route, it is surely the dream of most Explorers that they will not only find new systems but that those systems will contain sentient life. The more civilized such life is and the closer it is to making interstellar journeys of its own, the more there is for an Explorer to boast about and possibly exploit. Though, arguably, the greater the risk is as well.

In general, most Explorers do not go on to make contact with alien species they encounter. The wisest choice of action is to log the location of such worlds or systems and report the find to the Hyperspace Navigators Guild. Explorers are not expected to make contact with previously unrecorded sentient organisms and are rarely properly trained for such an occasion. Given all the harm that could result from the undisciplined introduction of new species to galactic society, such matters really are best left to the experts.

Certain Explorers have become adept at monitoring the culture and technology of newly discovered civilizations without actually encountering any of the creatures who make it up. These Explorers use remote viewing devices and the careful deployment of probe droids to monitor the societies and settlements of sentient creatures without causing any disturbance. Through careful recording of what he discovers, such an Explorer might feasibly come into possession of material that would be of interest to a wide variety of potential clients, without having to take so much as a speck of dust from the worlds on which the subjects of his investigation live.

Xenobiologists are, of course, interested in the discovery of any species, sentient or not, and xenoarchaeologists are pleased to study the plans of any artifacts or buildings that alien species produce, even (or especially) if those who made them have long since become extinct. An Explorer with strong comprehensive studies of unknown creatures and cultures might seek a customer at any one of the galaxy's famous universities.

However, the most exciting and profitable aspect of encountering new species is often produced by surveying their culture and technology and considering who might be most interested.

New musical instruments and ideas, from styles of performance to the use of strange frequencies and ratios, are of interest to virtuoso composers and swinging wail bands alike. A philosophical tradition or religious viewpoint might intrigue those who are on a sincere search for fresh spiritual insights, or they may just entertain those who are more cynical about such matters. Sophisticated Core Worlders might consider it the bleeding edge of avant-garde entertainment to spend an evening watching a holodrama written and produced by members of a primitive civilization who are, as of yet, unaware that such audiences even exist. They may even like to gorge themselves on the most recently discovered alien cuisine as they do so.

Explorers have to be wary when discovering new species. Hostile organisms come in all sorts of shapes and sizes, from lumbering monsters to sentient beings to tiny microorganisms that can develop into a dangerous infection or even a virulent plague.

BLAZING NEW HYPERROUTES

As important as the discovery of new planets and systems is, it can be a far more rewarding exercise not to bother with the exploration of realspace in favor of discovering new and stable routes through hyperspace.

The trailblazing Explorers who chart new hyperroutes face a different set of dangers to those who go looking for unexplored areas of realspace. Hyperspace is a shadow of reality, but objects in realspace can still have an impact on the fabric of hyperspace. The greater substance of either reality is mostly sterile emptiness, and a short unplanned journey between realspace and hyperspace is unlikely to result in mishap. However, if an Explorer makes a number of such trips or moves through hyperspace in a reckless manner, he will sooner or later find himself meshed within the matter of an asteroid, incinerated by the heat of a star, or crushed within the gravitational field of a black hole.

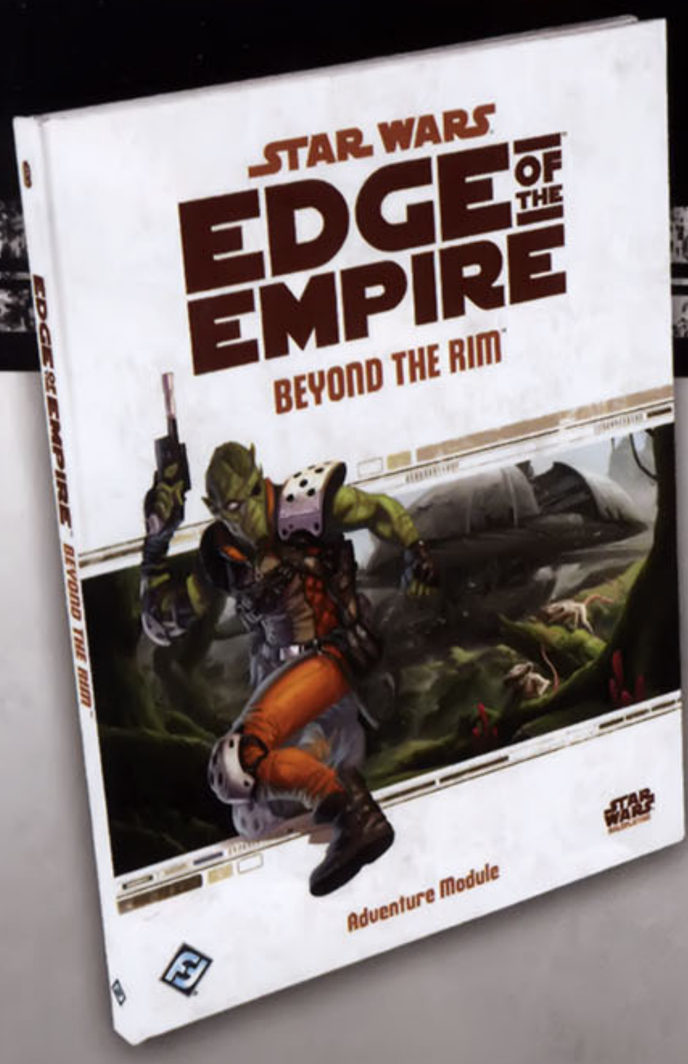
Journeying through hyperspace pays its dividend due to the fact that great distances can be traveled in a fraction of the normal time. Many people who make uncharted hyperspace journeys can become hopelessly lost. Even the most comprehensive and up-to-date navigational computers sometimes find themselves bamboozled after a hyperspace journey that leads them to an unexpected destination. Explorers who blaze trails into new territory or who are forced to alter their journey once it is underway can run a real risk of finding themselves isolated from those regions of the galaxy that are known and charted.

For such reasons, even the most cautious approach to mapping a new hyperspace route is deemed a risky business, and this explains why there are relatively few major hyperspace routes in the galaxy.

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